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# The social construction of identity in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks

Lisa Lynn Zagumny

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Lisa Lynn Zagumny entitled "The social construction of identity in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Education.

Clinton B. Allison, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

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# THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY IN NINETEENTH CENTURY GEOGRAPHY SCHOOLBOOKS

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Lisa Lynn Zagumny
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## DEDICATION

To Willy A. Hogue
December 27, 1974 – August 14, 1997
Your enthusiasm and vibrancy brought
happiness to everyone around you.

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## ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the social construction of identity in geography schoolbooks published in the United States between 1802 and 1897. A growing literature on recognizing differences among varying and shifting identities informs this dissertation. During the nineteenth century, the United States was in the process of constructing a self-image or national identity, and the social, cultural, political, and economic interests of this time shaped the character of this national identity.

The public education system was one site where this image construction took place. Through its construction and maintenance in schools, particularly in textbooks, a national identity was passed on to succeeding generations. Geography schoolbooks emphasized people and places, delineating identities by establishing a Eurocentric, middle-class, masculinist, Protestant norm, and then specifying variance and deficiencies from and to that norm. After examining over three-hundred geography schoolbooks, I chose nineteen textbooks that I decided reflect the overall character of nineteenth century geography schoolbooks published in the United States for common schools. Geared towards younger learners, these books contained representations of the world for the student. Content analysis of visual and written representations allows us to see how the variables of class, religion, gender, and race intersected and influenced each other as they were used to construct an ideal national identity for the United States.

Visual imagery often regarded as decorative enhancement for the written text receives much attention in this study because visuals convey immediate information. Graphic images in these schoolbooks sometimes enhanced written text, but quite often they stood alone as the single source of information, thus they deserve critical analysis.

Representations both visual and written, were used to construct a national identity that encouraged the nation's youth to see explicitly what they were and what they were not. Through the images depicted of the United States and the world beyond, geography schoolbooks molded Americans' views of themselves by describing and defining the United States as well as by highlighting supposed differences between their country and other parts of the world.

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# INTRODUCTION

## Constructed identity

During the nineteenth century, America was in the process of constructing its self-image. The character of this self-image or national identity was molded by the experience of the American Revolution, and was reinforced through a variety of laws and practices, and maintained by the political and economic interests of the time. The Constitution, approved in 1787, strengthened national authority and the opening words, "We the People" define the ultimate source of political legitimacy, but the framers expected the nations already established "aristocracy" to continue providing leadership. One major way in which America's national identity was perpetuated and passed on to succeeding generations was through the public education system, of which school textbooks were an important part. American geography schoolbooks, influenced by the political and economic interests of the time, played a central role in creating and perpetuating this national identity. An investigation into the role that geography schoolbooks played in the social construction of a national identity provides an understanding of nineteenth century nationalism in the United States and reveals some of the antecedents of particular aspects of "American" identity and attitudes toward the world today.

The nebulous term "American" requires clarification before preceding. The representation of national identity in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks published in the United States is the topic of this dissertation. In this context, when I use the term "American national identity," I am referring to the national identity of just the

United States. I recognize that the term "America" applies to the entire hemisphere. As citizens in both South and North America frequently remind us, the label "American" encompasses a much larger geographical space than just the United States, thus I have made a conscious effort to carefully delineate such a national identity. Recognizing the importance and power of language makes possible the deconstruction of an inherently arrogant label that colonizes large, independent countries both north and south of the United States.

For a new nation, which the United States was in the nineteenth century, the construction of a national identity provided a concrete model around which a desperate citizenry could express their nationalism. Such a model of national identity allowed for easily understood, often visual, imagery that demonstrated to the nation's members just who they should be emulating. Written descriptions of such models are important, but visual images provide immediate information.

## Representation

Representations, written and visual, are slippery and problematic. Representations purport to communicate knowledge, values, and identity, yet, at best, they are only partial depictions. Moreover, visual representations convey a particular reality suggesting distanced objectivity. Whether photographs or artists' renderings, visual representations purposely portray the world; they re-present signs and symbols that are always already removed from reality. The representation is intended to stand for the thing being represented, when in actuality it is only a symbol. For the nation, however, representations can enhance attachment to and identification with the ideal collectivity.

Representations, both literal and figurative, were crucial to the process of constructing a national identity. For the members of this newly founded nation, written descriptive representations and graphic figurative images helped to produce norms and to create a sense of identity. Representations of the world beyond the United States were also useful in helping construct a sense of identity. Placed in opposition to the world outside, the framing of this national identity in textbooks helped the nation's members to see what they were not. As Benedict Anderson (1991, 6) has observed, nations are "imagined communities" with specific boundaries, both physical and social, that distinguish them from one another. Meant to enhance a feeling of belonging and conformity, the imagined nation emphasizes shared culture at home and differences between that home and the world outside. Based on the geographic boundaries of the newly founded nation, and popular conceptions of class, religion, gender, and race, a national identity was constructed to approximate a perceived ideal. Schools were one site, perhaps the most pervasive and enduring site, where this image construction took place and was maintained.

## Relationship with education

Schools in the United States were the institutions where a specific ideology could be disseminated most easily; textbooks and the curriculum were unabashedly infused with the political and economic interests of the time. The discipline of geography played an important role in this image construction because in the nineteenth century geography was a centerpiece of the curriculum in the schools. Through the images depicted of the United States and the world beyond, geography textbooks molded Americans' views of themselves by describing and defining the United States as well as by highlighting

supposed differences between the United States and other parts of the world. Romanticized versions of history and educational systems helped to maintain such representations. Such versions of history allow representations to be fashioned for the political and economic interests of the time. Claimed as "legitimate" knowledge, such representations were presented to students as "valid" information that was standard and neutral. Representations of national identity perpetuated and entrenched political and economic forces in the nineteenth century United States by depicting people around the world in such a way as to reinforce an idealized national identity for the United States.

Classroom learning techniques also helped shape the imaginative experience. As education systems in the United States evolved over the course of the nineteenth century, geography maintained its status as a primary discipline throughout. While rote recitation and memorization dominated teaching methodologies early on, a more student-centered approach was popularized by the close of the nineteenth century. Textbooks and textbook publishing changed dramatically in terms of presentation, yet the overall message persevered. These textbooks helped define exactly what it meant to be an "American" as David Tyack (1967, 182) proficiently demonstrates, "They [schoolbook authors] wished to shape a national character as well as individual characters, and this required teaching an American political consensus." Nowhere could a specific ideology be more easily disseminated than in schools where there was, by the middle of the century, a government-mandated captive audience.

## Previous research

Education historiographers have studied various textbooks (including McGuffey Readers) and the messages they conveyed, but a careful analysis of the messages

delivered in geography texts is far from complete (see Carpenter 1963; FitzGerald 1979; Loewen 1995; Nietz 1961). Scholars have shown that McGuffey Readers wielded tremendous influence during the nineteenth century due in part to their popularity. According to John Nietz (1961, 73), between 1836 and 1920, approximately 120 million copies were sold. John Westerhoff (1978, 15) remarked that, "No other textbooks bearing a single person's name have approached that mark." Addressing the influence of schoolbooks and McGuffey Readers, in particular, Henry Steele Commager (1950, 38; 1976, 12) explains that patriotism and a uniform national character was insistently presented.

Ruth Miller Elson (1964), who researched over one-thousand American schoolbooks from the nineteenth century, including geography texts, provides perhaps the most thorough study on geography texts by an historian up to this point. By systematically illuminating the national experience through the lens of schoolbooks, Elson demonstrates the making of a distinctly "American" character. The schoolbook carefully delineated for the nineteenth century student just who they should respect and emulate.

More recently, historian Susan Schulten (2001) thoughtfully examined geography in the Untied States from 1880 to 1950. By drawing on the intersecting traditions of school geography, mass-market cartography, and the National Geographic Society, Schulten demonstrates the malleable nature of geographic knowledge that is all too often interpreted (particularly by those outside the discipline) as objective fact. While Schulten does take intro account geography schoolbooks, her overall purpose is broader than the books and the education system.

Another historian, Stephen Heathorn (2000) has also analyzed the relationship between nation and education. He looks at how elementary schools in England from 1880 to 1914 bolstered national identities through constructions of class, gender, and race. Similarly, William E. Marsden (2001) interrogates history and geography textbooks in Britain and the United States. While his study is historically expansive, late eighteenth century to early twenty-first century, it reinforces the schoolbook as a cultural, material artifact that reflects larger social, political, and economic influences.

Until recently, geographers, themselves, paid little attention to these texts, as Avril Maddrell (1998) has observed. Cheryl McEwan (1998) and Maddrell (1998), however, have recently addressed the topic of gender in nineteenth century geography texts. McEwan (1998, 215), who focuses on physical geography and gender in nineteenth century Britain with emphasis on the construction of gender, shows how the gendering of science excluded women. From her examination of the discourses of gender and race in British geography school texts, Maddrell (1998, 98) concludes that a masculinist, middle-class view of Britain was reinforced with geography books. Teresa Ploszajska (1999) recently addressed the relationship between geographical education, imperialism, and identity in English schools from 1870 to 1944. She concludes that geography education helped form perspectives of local, national, imperial, and global citizenship. Understanding that one of the purposes of nineteenth century textbooks, whether in Britain or the United States, was to reinforce a certain version of nationalism allows us to better decipher the messages delivered in these books. The theoretical framework informing this research will be further developed in chapter two.

## National identity

The complex concepts of nationalism, national identity, and the nation are also explored in chapter one not only in relation to one another but also in relation to the educational systems and practices that reinforced such concepts. Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis (1992, 4) explain that a sense of belonging to or identifying with members of a collectivity becomes the underlying current for nationalism. Nationalism requires loyalty and devotion to the nation where one's nation is exalted above all others, and certain cultural ways and collective interests are promoted. National identity can therefore be drawn from nationalism or identification with the state, with symbols and systems of representation displayed for the citizenry to emulate. National identity is often articulated as a form of control because it is constituted in relation to an "other." Here, the connection between national identity and nationalism becomes clear considering both define who belongs and who does not. Both nationalism and national identity are further problematized when we contemplate the subtleties of the nation and nation-state. A nation, like the United States for example, is composed of a community of people of various ethnic and cultural groups and possesses a more or less defined territory and government. A nation-state, on the other hand, is made up of a relatively homogeneous group of people, one rather than several ethnic and cultural groups. Particular to this research, however, is that the United States in the nineteenth century despite its cultural complexity was trying to be a nation-state. This effort to narrow our identity to a homogeneous Anglo-American ancestry is rather evident in nineteenth century American geography schoolbooks. The specific models of national identity presented in these schoolbooks for students to emulate showcase middle-class, white

Protestants as the ideal. Any group or individual that failed to conform to this ideal was literally "othered" by being mentioned as part of the United States only rarely. Non-European people around the world were equally neglected or negatively exoticized. As previously stated, nineteenth century education systems and practices, and particularly schoolbooks from the period, contain representations that attempt to develop and perpetuate a specific national identity.

## Selection of books

Chapter three specifically addresses methodology. I systematically reduced the number of geography textbooks used in this research from over three hundred to nineteen books published between 1802 and 1897 (book selection is discussed in chapter three). In this dissertation I analyze five books published between 1802 and 1827, eight books published between 1832 and 1874, and five books published between 1882 and 1897. While hundreds of books could have been included, I judged that those listed above provide a representative sample of nineteenth century American geography schoolbooks. Focusing on fewer books allows for a more thorough critique of the messages delivered to students than would an exhaustive survey. As discussed in chapter three, I chose these books based on availability, popularity, academic level, and content.

University and private collections house the schoolbooks used in this research. The Nietz Collection at the University of Pittsburgh's Hillman Library is a valuable resource for research on schoolbooks. Housing thousands of school texts from the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Nietz Collection provided a sound foundation for research on geography texts. The University of Tennessee's Special Collections also provided dozens of nineteenth century geography texts. While there are

few sources providing any authoritative statistics on the popularity and use of these texts in schools, some indication of how often schools adopted these books was gleaned. The sheer number of texts by one author provides a clue as to popularity, as does the number of revisions or editions to a particular text. Biographical information on some of the authors attests to their recognition as schoolbook authors.

## Variables analyzed

As the prefaces explain, these geography texts were designed for use in primary schools and later in elementary schools, and the books were targeted to young school children with little experience in geography. Books for older or more experienced learners vary little from primary and elementary texts in content except that they usually include more specific statistics on production, manufacturing, and commerce. In analyzing these books, the use of the variables of class, religion, gender, and race, exposes how the constructed ethnocentric ideal national identity was perpetuated on a number of levels. Ethnocentrism, here, refers to using one's own ethnicity or nationality as the standard by which to judge an alternative ethnic group or nation, while, at the same time, regarding your own group as superior. Class, religion, gender, and race often intersect with and influence one another; hence I decided analyzing these three variables in isolation was not wise.

Both graphic and written representations are interrogated to determine the thoroughness of the information presented to students in these books. Equally important is the information left out of the texts, as such omitted information can enhance a particular view of the world. Therefore, that which is missing in these books will be examined.

## Historical setting

The historical context of the nineteenth century United States is the topic of chapter four. An examination of the context in which these books were produced, as well as the position in society of the authors, helps to explain the content of the books. Kevin Kumashiro (2001) reminds us that these authors were working within the broader context of nineteenth century America, and by addressing their social position we understand that the accounts they constructed are subjective and partial. The information the authors selected to include in or exclude from texts reflects, in part, what was happening on a larger social level. The social, cultural, political, and economic contexts require consideration when analyzing nineteenth century texts because they influence purposes of education, educational policy, and curriculum. Also, the sources used by these authors helps to illustrate the context of nineteenth century America. Available, but unused sources, whether untapped intentionally or not by these authors, will also be addressed in order to explore the reasons for their apparent uncritical acceptance of specific (and unnecessarily limited) information. Primary sources informing this phase of my research include testimonials by people living in the United States during the nineteenth century, visitors from other parts of the world, and travel writers.

*Harper's Weekly* magazine is another valuable source from which I gathered information concerning nineteenth century American perspectives that may or may not have influenced the geography text writers. First published in 1857, *Harper's Weekly* echoes and creates public opinion during the second half of the nineteenth century. Geared toward middle to upper income families, the paper played a significant role in the shaping of American national identity.

## One century of geography texts

Chapters five, six, and seven address the information and representations presented in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks published in the United States. My conclusion, based on the information (re)presented in these books, is that a particular construction of national identity is continually reinforced. The analysis that follows breaks down these constructions over periods of time to see how similar identities were presented over one century. Through particular representations, authors reinforced views on what it meant to be a "member" of the United States. Although these representations remain quite constant over the nineteenth century, there are also changes and exceptions that require attention. Some authors appear to be more sensitive when representing people, including more extensive and nuanced information.

# CHAPTER 2
# CONSTRUCTING THE NATION

## "Official" knowledge

Scholars and educators, representing a variety of ideologies, concerns, and goals, scrutinize textbooks for their political and social messages, in recognition that the politically powerful influence the content of textbooks and, as a result, easily exercise hegemony over culture (see Apple 1991; Apple 1993; Apple and Christian-Smith 1991; Carpenter 1963; Elson 1964; FitzGerald 1979; Kumashiro 2001; Loewen 1995; Luke 1988; Luke, deCastell, and Luke 1989; Maddrell 1998; McEwan 1998; Nietz 1961; Spring 1991; Tyack 1967). In education systems, and particularly in textbooks, knowledge is all too often presented as standard, static, and neutral (Spring 1991). The supposed neutral compendium of facts in textbooks signifies what Michael Apple (1993, 46) refers to as "legitimate" knowledge structured by specific groups, most frequently those with power.

Seen by the general public as objective and above criticism, textbooks, nonetheless, contain particular constructions of reality organized for specific purposes. Carmen Luke, Suzanne de Castell, and Allan Luke (1989) point out that textbook content embodies information that society perceives as valid. Encoded and transmitted through textbooks, this version of knowledge is the result of larger social forces, including class, race, and gender patterns. Rather than society as a whole, specific constituents, with particular aims and with the power to impose them, create and maintain "official" knowledge as the standard knowledge. Michael Apple and Linda Christian-Smith (1991,

2) stress that knowledge is legitimated through "complex power relations and struggles among identifiable class, race, gender/sex, and religious groups."

Benedict Anderson (1991) originally and subtly demonstrated that nations were imagined into existence through major institutions, especially through what he ingeniously refers to as "print-capitalism." The imagined community for Anderson was made possible by advances in technology, particularly printing processes through which printed words and images were dispersed to audiences far and wide. Now, even members of the largest collectivity could share information which, in turn, initiated standardization of that information. Print culture, in this sense, has the ability to make a single vernacular language common to a nation. While a single vernacular never became standard in the United States, the strong desire to make English the official language stems from a nineteenth century doctrine of Anglo-American superiority and racism. The print-capitalism Anderson refers to allowed Noah Webster to distance the United States from England by standardizing spelling, but, more importantly, essentializing an ideal national identity for the imagined community.

As an object of social and economic regulation, school texts and the much larger social contexts are interrelated. Highly competitive, these books are cultural artifacts and economic commodities that are both market and state driven. As Apple (1991, 7) has so clearly explained, the textbook is an economic commodity because "it is subject to intense competition and to the pressures of profit," at the same time it is a regulated commodity because it has political and cultural roles. Because of its legal enforcement and sanctioning within public schools, Luke, de Castell, and Luke (1989, 254) explain, the textbook has a "legally assured captive audience," hence, the textbook plays a unique

role of culturally stipulated authority. Furthermore, with school curricula in the United States being the result of intense negotiation, and sometimes conflict, the political process of "official knowledge" helps make clear the complexity and often contradictory position of schoolbooks, and helps us understand, according to Apple and Christian-Smith (1991, 7), "that arguments about textbooks are really cultural politics." These books signify through content and form particular ways of selecting and organizing a vast body of possible information.

## Hegemony and patriarchy

The hegemonic forces informing textbooks through so-called legitimate knowledge cannot be separated from the larger social institutions concerned with the transmission of "valid" information. The ethnocentric beliefs and values of the West as the epitome of civilization led to a specific ordering of the world (Willinsky 1998). Imperialism afforded a decidedly ethnocentric (Eurocentric) view through hegemonic patriarchal forces subtly entwined with social constructions of people and places. Antonio Gramsci (1998) explains hegemony as the power exercised by any class that has achieved a position of economic importance such that it can superimpose its worldview on socially subordinate groups. Maintained by consent as well as force or threat of force, successful hegemony not only expresses the interest of a dominant class but also is able to get a subordinate class to see these interests as valid and natural, precluding questioning. Hegemony is an active process that is maintained through tradition, more specifically "selective tradition," as Raymond Williams (1989, 58) explains. Hegemony includes an intentional selective version of the past, and hegemonic traditions emphasize certain practices and customs while they exclude others. This hegemonic maintenance of

a specific version of reality is not only apparent in history, but it also informs the present and future. By emphasizing what is and is not valid, the "selective tradition" perpetuated by hegemonic forces is an account of history proposed to confirm the present.

Particularly in the nineteenth century United States, these forces or the group with power was also seen as patriarchal: overwhelmingly male, specifically white and middle-class. According to Linda McDowell (1999, 16), "patriarchy refers to the system in which men as a group are constructed as superior to women as a group and so assumed to have authority over them." Nationalism sharpens the distinction between "us" and "them," and women in these books often symbolize such difference being often depicted as "other." Cynthia Enloe (1989) wisely identifies how the patriarchal forces pressuring western women could be ignored, and even transferred to non-western women through the ideology of the nation. Western women could view themselves as powerful if they believed the "other" was oppressed and made powerless by their very culture. The hegemonic patriarchal forces in the nineteenth century United States constructed a white, middle-class, masculinist national identity, and this process is revealed in the textbooks of the time.

## The nation and nationalism

The nation and nation-state both are political institutions that govern a particular territory and the people living within their boundaries even though the geographic boundaries tend to be rather malleable and change over time (Herb 1999). A nation-state as a political entity is fairly autonomous and inhabited by a particularly homogeneous collectivity of people. A nation, on the other hand, like the United States, while still a political unit, typically consists of numerous people of varying nationalities, ethnicities,

and cultures. Although the United States, formally established as a nation in the late eighteenth century, has always territorially, rather than socially, politically, or economically, included a heterogeneous community of people, during the nineteenth century the powerful, and sometimes not so powerful, attempted to construct the United States as a nation-state. By reinforcing a constructed identity of the ideal citizen of the United States, these schoolbook authors attempted to narrow a truly heterogeneous group of people into one identity of Anglo-American ancestry. Stephen Heathorn (2000, 18) explains that this is the very purpose of nationalist ideology, "to naturalize and essentialize the nation, to suggest that the meaning of human existence can only be understood through the focused lens of 'the nation.'"

Nationalism, then, can be defined as a sense of belonging to or identifying with members of the collectivity as Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis (1992, 4) explain. According to Tamar Mayer (1999, 1), as for members of a community who identify with and express their loyalty to the nation through a common ideology, nationalism can become an exercise of internal hegemony. Nationalism becomes hegemonic when empowerment is exclusive to those who share a sense of belonging to the so-called nation. This sense of nationalism is what Anderson (1991, 6) refers to as an "imagined community," where the nation is not the determined product of given social or cultural conditions, but imagined (constructed) into existence. Nationalism, for these geography schoolbook authors, placed primary emphasis on the promotion of white, middle-class, Protestant, masculinist interests so dominant in the nineteenth century United States. Deemed the prevalent and "proper" culture of that particular time and place, this identity was constructed as *the* national identity for inhabitants of the United States. Those who

failed to fit into this narrowly constructed identity were literally "othered" by rarely being mentioned or negatively exoticized.

Gramsci (1971, 350) adds further insight when he explains, "Every relationship of 'hegemony' is necessarily an educational relationship and occurs not only within a nation, between the various forces of which the nation is composed, but in the international and worldwide field, between complexes of national and continental civilizations." While nationalistic discourse stresses the propaganda of loyalty and unity, national membership is much more exclusive. Deniz Kandiyoti (1994) clarifies how national identity and cultural difference are articulated as forms of control. The constructing of national membership belongs to what Edward Said (1978, 55) has referred to as an "imaginative geography and history," where the nation intensifies its own sense of self by dramatizing the distance and difference between itself and other nations. Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1992, 4) further explain that the ethnic groups who belong to the nation are assumed to share a sense of commonality with others which, of course, involves the social construction of a common origin as a basis for community. A sense of belonging to or identifying with members of a collectivity becomes the underlying current for nationalism. While seemingly superficial and easy to achieve, such feelings of connection are rather limited. Thomas Hylland Eriksen (1993, 11) reinforces Said's (1978, 55) "imaginative geography and history," when he explains, "national identities are constituted in relation to others; the very idea of the nation presupposes that there are other nations, or at least other peoples, who are not members of the nation." Nationalism defines who can and cannot belong based on "acceptable" or

"proper" constructions, making it impossible for all members of the collectivity to possess a similar ability to interact with or participate in the nation.

## Contradiction and myth

Ideologically, nationalism is rather complex as Mayer (1999, 3) has observed in that "members of the nation believe in their common origin and in the uniqueness of their common history." Mayer goes on to explain that much of this supposedly shared history, aggrandized through "national symbols" and "communal sufferings," fails to be recognized as contradictory. As the emotional glue, nationalist ideology is quite often Janus-faced resulting in the uneven development of national consciousness. Guntram Herb (1999, 25) and Kandiyoti (1994, 378) explain that the contradiction comes from trying to reconcile an idyllic past with modernization, causing national identity to be a contested discourse. Members of the nation may resist reconciliation of such contradictions about the official national ideology. E. J. Hobsbawm (1992, 11) notes that the national ideology may not necessarily fit with the practices and beliefs of the citizens. Renato Rosaldo (1989, 69) refers to this contradiction as "imperialist nostalgia," where the agents of colonialism long for the very forms of life they altered or destroyed. Such romantic versions of history are far from harmless; yearning in these terms conflates imaginations and conceals brutal domination. "When the real is no longer what it used to be, nostalgia assumes its full meaning," Jean Baudrillard (1998, 354) argues. National identities do have histories, as Stuart Hall (1994, 394) explains, but they undergo constant transformation with each interpretation.

Because it is based on myth, the national narrative is part of the reason that national consciousness develops unevenly. Mayer (1999, 3) refers to this as "fictive

ethnicity," where myth remains an essential fact of the life of the nation. Perpetuated by embracing these myths, the nation itself cannot survive without them. Moreover, these myths are not benign fiction intended to unify the nation. Whereas a nation's self-representation always involves myth about the nation's creation and about its members, myth by definition does not necessarily represent historical accuracy. Hobsbawm (1992, 12) succinctly captures the essence of myth when he states, "nationalism requires too much belief in what is patently not so." Hall (1994, 395) takes this further, explaining how the past itself "is always constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative, and myth." Based on exclusionary classist, racist, and sexist ideologies, the national myth affects everyone differently. National myths are more like ghosts or specters that continue to haunt us long after their creation and re-creation. Constructed to legitimize domination and exploitation, supposed mythical unity reproduces the symbolic border guards where people are included or excluded depending on the desirability of their identities.

## Identity

Ambiguity arises from issues concerning national, ethnic, and racial identity. Hall (1994, 392) explains "identity as a 'production' . . . is never complete" rather, it is a continual process. A person's identity is perpetually in flux despite the pursuit of an illusion of wholeness and selfhood. Continually interrupted by changing historical moments, one's membership in groups, widely accepted as ready-made syntheses, offers a sense of identity. Michel Foucault (1972, 22) argues there is a "spirit" which allows for "the sovereignty of collective consciousness to emerge as the principle of unity and explanation," but that this must be recognized as reflexive rather than intrinsic or

autochthonous. The nation is a product of a particular historical conjuncture that changes and shifts over time.

Identity, then, is a slippery concept that can rarely be pinned down and made stable. In these nineteenth century geography schoolbooks, constructed identities are essentialized and made natural through religious, class, gender, and racial stereotypes. Prototypes of men and women suggest the constructions are stable and unchanging, where an essence can be captured to exemplify, like objects in a museum or exhibition that are displayed for our inspection and voyeuristic viewing pleasure.

Nationalist projects often attempt to redefine collectivities as a single nation in a number of ways. Through regular, repetitive "exercises of solidarity," according to Mayer (1999, 3), we create a national "moral code" where such exercises become accepted as "natural." These acts are performed not only in educational settings but in cultural, religious, and political spheres as well. Such acts in education include reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, singing the national anthem, celebrating patriotic holidays, and boosting morale and loyalty to the school at pep rallies (with the idea that this school pride will transfer over to national pride upon graduation). "What we perform repeatedly is what we become," says Mayer (1999, 4), and she reminds us that these performances are "based on norms that predate us." While these repeated acts within spheres of education, culture, religion, and politics contribute to national uniformity, Jouni Hakli (1994) explains how the use of iconography also plays a specific role.

## Images

Deconstructing representations, including visual images, has increasingly received attention from scholars and educators (see Lutz and Collins 1993 for a

thoroughly detailed interrogation of photographs in *National Geographic*). Commonly used to enhance written text, visual images, while often lacking in communicative terms, relay their own messages. The very composition of a visual requires critique as it conveys information through the placement of objects/subjects within its arrangement. The focal point determines what receives the most attention from the viewer and suggests importance. The interaction between viewed and viewer also insinuates power or lack there of. Visual information, may, by its absence, relay messages purposely constructed by the artist.

The technical changes in printmaking and photography during the nineteenth century are equally important in this study of constructed identities in geography schoolbooks. Engravings from artists' drawings are common in these schoolbooks until the last quarter of the nineteenth century when photographs supply the original image for the print. Theoretically, it would seem artists' drawings were more susceptible to adulteration, yet we now know photographic compositions are equally malleable despite the suggested "objectivity" of say, the "distanced" photographic journalist. Inevitably, photographs are themselves already representations and do not, in fact, stand for the reality of that which is represented. The photograph-as-evidence no longer scaffolds unquestionable "objectivity;" it requires and deserves the same interrogation as representations in a variety of alternative media.

According to Herb (1999, 17), "nationalists have long used images of place to link people to the land." But, when so used, these images go beyond a mere link to the land; they are constructed and promoted as the ideal, as a model for members to follow, emulate, and strive for. Eriksen (1993, 103) further explains, "The use of presumably

typical ethnic symbols in nationalism is often intended to stimulate reflection on one's own cultural distinctiveness and thereby to create a feeling of nationhood." One purpose of a national narrative is to construct an ideal image of the nation and its constituents. This image is both figurative and literal in it's (re)presentation to multiple audiences, national and international (Mayer 1999, 9). As quoted in *Culture and Truth* by Renato Rosaldo (1989), the following statement from Adrienne Rich begins to address the problem with representations, or the lack there of, in school textbooks, "When someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing." Representations as such are rather problematic because quite often they are simplified stereotypes with passive objects subjected to a gaze where the viewer holds the power. While Stuart Hall (1992, 30) claims, "There is no escape from the politics of representation," historicizing representations allows for the particularity of such representations to be uncovered. Constructed to impart a particular message at a particular time, visual representations are frequently rather limited in communicative terms. The indeterminacy of both identity and representation must be addressed considering their intimate connections. Despite the acknowledgement that identities and representations are social constructions, they continue to be socially real. Represented in every medium through which the nation is mobilized, we see the ideal image of the nation and its models.

## Connection with education systems

According to Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis (1989), education systems and the media are the prime institutions for the ideological production of the nation. And

Hobsbawm (1992, 10) adds that language, mass literacy, and schooling are conditions of nationalism as well as requirements for its production. Whereas the enforcement of a uniform language and education help to erase differences and promote homogeneity and the national moral code, the perpetuation of nationalism goes beyond the media and systems of education. Schools, however, do play an important role in promoting nationalist ideology. The enforcement of a uniform language, patriotic exercises, religious and secular holidays, daily routines, compulsory attendance, and textbooks all help to inculcate students with the national moral code. Seen as crucial elements of schooling, such practices attempt to enforce a common national ideology.

Scholars and educators alike have clearly demonstrated the connection between nation-building and education systems. Ruth Miller Elson (1964), in *Guardians of Tradition*, succinctly captures the desire of nineteenth century schoolbook authors to inculcate students with a strong sense of national pride. In her study of over one-thousand spellers, readers, geographies, histories, and arithmetics, Elson gleans their lessons about God, nature, man, culture, and society. She explicates the conservative socialization deemed necessary for molding students into a virtuous citizenry. The unscrupulous ethnocentrism is distinctly "American" in these schoolbooks. The authors developed a national narrative, according to Elson (1964, 342), "By selecting what they consider most essential to preserve in America . . . [and offering] to the broadest and most impressionable American audience an image of themselves as a guide to the future." Numerous articles addressing geography education, in particular, support Elson's findings. Fourteen years after Elson's book, Laurence Hauptman (1987), analyzing only geography schoolbooks, purports, "student geographies were one small link in the

intellectual chain leading the nation to late-nineteenth-century imperialism." Hauptman specifically addresses westward expansion and manifest destiny in the United States, concluding that representations in these schoolbooks affirmed "American" nationalism.

The connection between nationalism and geography specific to the United States is also drawn by Martin Brückner (1999). Thoroughly researched, yet superfluously expressed, Brückner's article reveals how privileged citizens of the United States during the early republic used geography (maps, visuals, and textbooks) to express their national identity. His critique of portraits by Ralph Earl led Brückner (1999, 336) to conclude, "Just as they [local citizens] considered printed maps and geography textbooks as 'truthful' signifiers, so too did they recognize geography as an artistic form through which to transmute the rhetorical presence of nationalism into perceptible, tangible form."

Avril Maddrell (1996) provides another study of geography schoolbooks as they relate to and reinforce the ideology of the nation. While her thoroughly critical analysis is specific to Britain, the overall theme equally corresponds to geographic education in the United States: the geographical and educational arenas, integral to political and social discourses of the time, reflect the larger prevailing ideas and values. Maddrell unequivocally demonstrates how school geography played a critical role in the British colonial project of the nineteenth century. I will show that geography schoolbooks published in the United States were no less crucial to the national and international project of bolstering perceptions of the privileged citizens of the United States.

Teresa Ploszajska (1999) and Stephen Heathorn (2000) have also recently interrogated the relationship between nation and education in English schools. Ploszajska

analyzes school geography as an instrument of imperialism from 1870 to 1944. She provides a thorough historical context in which she situates her critique of geography schoolbooks and their representations. In her attempt to reconcile the functions of school geography and broader cultural discourses, Ploszajska reveals the permeable boundaries of identity between geographical education and empire. Heathorn, like Ploszajska, approaches nation and education in English schools, but in a shorter time span, 1880 to 1914, and in elementary school, in general, not only geography education. Heathorn finds that compulsory schooling fostered national identities which were further reinforced by constructions of gender, class, and race. Again, although Heathorn's very thorough study of more than four-hundred-fifty schoolbooks is specific to Britain, similar themes are found in schoolbooks published in the United States. As I will argue about elementary geography schoolbooks published in the nineteenth century United States, Heathorn (2000, 201) claims, "the English needed subject races that they could help develop towards 'civilization' so as to legitimize their own benevolent self-image."

Another scholarly endeavor clearly delineating the relationship between nation and education, specifically geographical education, is Susan Schulten's (2001) *The Geographical Imagination in America, 1880-1950.* Schulten draws from a wider range of geographic traditions including school geography, mass-market cartography, and the National Geographic Society in her analysis of popular understandings of world geography in the United States. She insightfully demonstrates the power of maps, schoolbooks, and *National Geographic,* and how they worked to validate and essentialize representations of people and places as she "explores how geographical knowledge works

to create and entrench particular ideas about the world and the place of the United States within it (Schulten 2001, 14)."

Analyzing the educational imperatives of history, geography, science, language, and literature, John Willinsky (1998) reveals the strong ties between education and nation. In his award winning book, Willinsky is forthright and direct about imperialism's influence on education and how, over centuries, the world was classified and ordered for the West's understanding. His hope in tracing imperialistic social constructions is to enhance student understanding of just where the material they are studying comes from. Geography, for Willinsky (1998, 147), was a tool of the empire, "Geography fixes people to a given place in the world." Through maps and schoolbooks, students learned to view the world through a nationalist lens. Of course, geography is not alone in this imperialistic construction of the world and Willinsky makes this clear, but he, like the other researchers discussed above, unequivocally demonstrate education's role in the production of the nation.

## "Mentioning" in textbooks

Examining the supposed "official" knowledge makes obvious the relationship between nationalism and textbooks. Certain constructs of reality continue to live on in textbooks because, as Apple and Christian-Smith (1991, 10) explain, even though publishers are pressured to include the historical experiences of those who have been denied power, "Very little tends to be dropped from textbooks." Apple and Christian-Smith (1991, 10) further remind us that, "major ideological frameworks do not get markedly changed" in schoolbooks. The inclusion of the cultural expressions of people of color, women and labor through "mentioning" further maintains hegemonic

dominance. "Mentioning" refers to the fact that, at times, authors and publishers include information about subordinate groups but frequently the inclusion is rather limited. A sentence or two in a textbook gives authors little opportunity for discussion, often leading to gross overgeneralizations, and gives students little opportunity to understand or appreciate the "mentioned" culture. Rather, this practice results in a voyeuristic, demeaning tone because overgeneralizations obstruct deeper reflection or understanding.

Integral to a process of hegemony, "mentioning" perpetuates domination and subordination. Dominant cultures overtly and covertly impose their values and ideologies on subordinate groups but, as Tony Bennett (1986, 19) has observed, clandestine practices can be rather influential because of more subtle coercion. Rather than direct and obvious imposition, dominant groups gently mold subordinate views toward the values of the powerful. The subordinate culture may disconnect from resistant or oppositional cultures if they are convinced that the values of the powerful are legitimate. Beyond manipulation or indoctrination, the process of mentioning helps to shape perceptions, meanings, and values.

## Resistance and contradictions

We cannot assume that all knowledge in textbooks represents cultural domination. Allen Luke (1988, 29-30) has observed that one of the pitfalls of research on textbooks and curriculum has been the acceptance of these media as delivery systems of a particular ideology. While school textbooks are the primary carriers of an authorized version of legitimate knowledge, the messages in the books are not necessarily read by the teachers or students as the publishers or authors have intended.

Poststructuralist theories have helped to articulate the multiple and often contradictory meanings of any one text. The same text may yield different meanings for students and teachers according to variations in social context. Because teachers instruct with and through textbooks, schoolbooks are objects of teacher mediation and, therefore, already undergo re-interpretation by the time they are presented to the students. Teachers themselves have "contradictory relationships" with texts, as Apple and Christian-Smith (1991, 9) have explained. So, while teachers experience textbooks in varying, multiple ways, student interpretations further complicate the endless possible readings.

Students do not necessarily learn what is taught in schools, and more specifically in textbooks. Again, as Jean Anyon (1981) argues, social context plays an important role here. Depending on student experience, representations in schoolbooks can present dominated, negotiated, or oppositional views to students. Students are far from the realist Lockean passive vessels into which information is poured. Rather, they are active learners, constructing their own responses and meanings (Freire 1997, 52; Belenky et al. 1986, 214). As the multiple and contradictory interpretations by students attest to, schoolbooks are complex texts to interpret and construct, and despite the overwhelming urge to view textbooks as disseminating a particular ideology, it is crucial to be aware of the exceptions.

Apple and Christian-Smith (1991, 9) remind us that not all textbooks or every section of a single book represents cultural domination. Authors may completely subvert hegemonic systems or they may treat potentially hegemonic information more subtly. By including vignettes about real people and their experiences and by presenting two or more conflicting interpretations of a situation, an author helps in the process of

empowerment. More emancipatory relations with texts allows for those being represented to participate in the representation and, thereby, sometimes, even control their own destinies. James Loewen (1996, 19) encourages the use of vignettes because they "instruct by human example," "show diverse ways that people can make a difference," and give space to characters otherwise relegated to the margins. Authors, however, frequently write within the restrictions of publishing companies that may have a motive contradictory to the author's. Again, to be emphatic, schoolbooks are particularly complex material artifacts, the result of many influences.

# CHAPTER 3
# "WE THE PEOPLE"?

## Selection of books

After examining over three-hundred geography textbooks, I chose nineteen books that were published between 1802 and 1897 (see Appendix). Focusing on just a few books during three periods I have identified: the early nineteenth century, the antebellum period through Reconstruction, and the last two decades of the century allows for an in-depth analysis of the messages conveyed to students. I chose the books based on their availability to me, popularity or frequency of use in schools during the nineteenth century, academic level, and content. Obviously, these books were purposely chosen. Qualitative research methods, including historiography, question the validity or objectivity of selecting data according to some fixed or already established standard such as random sampling. Even quantitative research methodologies reject the possibility of a random sample in a case like this because the selection of books is always already predetermined. Even if a random sample were possible, it might fail to include a book written by a female author. The present study includes two geography schoolbooks written by women (the only female authors of geography schoolbooks I have encountered to date) and these books were purposely selected for analysis in order to determine whether gender influenced representations of people and places. Although an exhaustive survey of nineteenth century geography schoolbooks might uncover nuances not found in the current selection of books, the messages conveyed overall reflect the social, political, and economic concerns of privileged, white, Protestant men and women living in the nineteenth century United States. The chosen books are housed in two special collections

libraries at two different universities and in two private collections: the Nietz Old Textbook Collection at Hillman Library Special Collections at the University of Pittsburgh, the Special Collections Library at the University of Tennessee, the private collection of Lydia Mihelič Pulsipher and my private collection.

After examining books in these collections, I attempted to determine popularity of the various books. Little authoritative information is available on the popularity (frequency of use) of the texts in schools. Some of the authors are acknowledged in encyclopedias of authors or other reference books such as *American National Biography* (Garraty and Carnes 1999), *Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography* (Wilson and Fiske 1888), *Dictionary of American Biography* (Malone 1934), and *The National Cyclopedia of American Biography* (1892). This recognition helps to attest to the privileged standing of particular authors such as Samuel Griswold Goodrich, Samuel Augustus Mitchell, and Jesse Olney. Another clue to popularity is the sheer number of texts by any one author. For example, the Hillman Library at the University of Pittsburgh has twenty-five different American geography schoolbooks by Samuel A. Mitchell published between 1859 and 1895. Revisions or editions to a particular text also help attest to the popularity of a specific book; for example there are fifty-two editions of *A Practical System of Modern Geography* by Jesse Olney (1846). While such indicators are no assurance of the adoption of these books in schools, they are reasonable indicators of popularity and use.

In regards to academic level and content, the books in this study were targeted to young school children with little experience in geography, and provided the first representations of the world for many students. Mary Hall explains in the preface of

*First Lessons in Geography for Children* (1885) that it is for six to ten year olds. In addition, statements such as, "designed for the use of beginners," as stated in *Primary Geography* (Von Steinwehr and Brinton 1870) or "adapted to the comprehension of young children" from the preface of *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* (1883) also attest to the age of intended readers. These statements made by the authors reveal that they were quite aware of just who they were sending messages to about the world around them.

Schoolbooks for young students help them to establish their initial concepts of the world. While it would be fallacious to deduce that the ideas and beliefs held by adults are the result of learning at an early age, and certainly what people recall about their childhood is necessarily influenced by their life experiences, nonetheless educational experiences do play a large role in constructing identities. For many of these nineteenth century students, geography schoolbooks may have been their only connection with the world beyond their immediate surroundings. According to Stephen Heathorn (2000, 212), "we know that children begin to develop some understanding of their national identities between the ages of four and seven." He continues to explain that this identity construction is realized through opposites. Symbolized "others" constructed in contrast to student identities (or, more likely, an idealized identity) show students who they are, or should be, by illustrating who they are not. So, while it is impossible to separate childhood understanding from subsequent perception, geography schoolbooks written for young students convey a certain reality they are meant to make their own.

## Variables

As discussed in the introduction, the obvious ethnocentric bias of the geography texts—the tendency to promote a particular version of "American" national identity—is of interest because of the potential of this bias to have significantly influenced popular attitudes of the public in the United States during the nineteenth century. Stereotypes abound, and as the African American writer, bell hooks (1992, 341), has explained, stereotypes are a form of representation. Stereotypes, like "fiction" or "fantasy," take the place of what is real. More importantly, hooks explains how distance perpetuates stereotypes, that distance inhibits "real knowing," and encourages projection onto that which is unknown. Through such projection, a particular version of national identity can be imparted to so-called desirable groups, and denied to those who, for one reason or another, fail to fit the "desired" image.

In this analysis of the stereotypes and biased messages delivered in these books, I have chosen to focus on the variables of class, religion, gender, and race, all of which I see as inextricably related. Deniz Kandiyoti (1994, 382) discusses the roles of gender, race, and class, noting that despite a national discourse of internal unity, a person's degree of "nationess" is measured according to such things as "gender, parentage, skin-colour--all those things that are not chosen and which, by virtue of their inevitability, elicit selfless attachment and sacrifice" to nation. Dependent upon the details of those variables (gender, class, and race), one's relationship with the nation may elicit a sense of belonging or, conversely, one of disconnection. These variables are by definition bestowed upon an individual by society (the nation) and are not a matter of choice. These variables, at times, are constructed as differential points along a sliding scale,

contingent upon the perceived desirability of certain qualities, according to the projected national identity. This construction, in turn, leads to internalized hierarchies along lines of gender, race, and class and, according to Linda McDowell (1999, 178), such hierarchies divide people by "othering" or defining certain qualities as inferior to the "norm." Or, as Kevin Kumashiro (2001, 5) explains, "the naming of difference . . . can serve less to describe who a group is, and more to prescribe who a group ought to be." For example, the geography schoolbooks analyzed in this dissertation show how gender representations originate in social relations that include those of race and class. The characters constructed as having so-called pleasing or desirable qualities are white and middle-class. And, in particular, white women living in the United States are represented as physically attractive, well-heeled, passive, and nurturing. Such characteristics of women are deemed "natural," intrinsic, "begotten" as distinguished from constructed, and just the way things are (or are supposed to be). Tamar Mayer (1999, 18) and McDowell (1999, 195) remind us that these supposedly natural gender and racial differences are used to legitimize inequalities in class position. Constructed differently in varying historical contexts, the centrality of the roles (race, class, and gender) will differ. Kumashiro (2001, 5) explains how treating identities as singular entities denies the complexity of identities and hides the restricted status of particular identities. Again, the illustration above of white women living in the United States provides an example for us. If everyone else is judged in comparison to this particular identity, class and race are ignored by such a representation being deemed "natural." Again, these so-called "natural" characteristics have been constructed as such, and if we accept the representation of a white, middle-class, "American" woman as "natural," we fail to

recognize that class and race are a privilege in this particular instance. The nineteenth century United States was far less accepting of or comfortable for, working-class, non-white women. Hence, particular to space and time, empowerment of one construction usually occurs at the expense of another, or as Stuart Hall (1994, 397) explains, "Without relations of difference, no representation could occur." Again, as explained in chapter one, following Gramsci's notion of hegemony where any class that has achieved economic importance superimposes their worldview on socially subordinate groups, class cannot be ignored in an analysis of the complex circumstances of cultural representation. Class, race, and gender play a crucial role in national identity.

## Class, religion, gender, and race

Socio-economic class issues provide foundations for the developing national identity in the nineteenth century United States. In their attempts to construct a homogeneous nation, the privileged defined themselves in comparison to "others" by their physical possessions. Alexis deTocqueville (2000, 57) observed that money enabled people (men) to define their social standing in the United States, "I know of no country, indeed, where the love of money has taken stronger hold on the affections of men, and where the profounder contempt is expressed for the theory of the permanent equality of property." The process of production underpinning the great accumulation of wealth in the nineteenth century United States, however, suggests the bourgeoisie, defined by their physical possessions, were able to distinguish themselves from those actually performing the labor. Even the transformation from a largely agrarian to a commercial economy allowed the privileged to perceive themselves as the industrious, fortune-makers all the while deeming the actual laborers invisible. Both Ronald Takaki

(2000) and Eric Foner (1998) insightfully articulate how economic growth and territorial expansion stemmed from exploitation and appropriation of the productive classes marginalized the constructions of race. By appropriating desirable lands held by Native Americans, annexing much of Mexico, and extracting the essential slave labor of blacks, the construction of a national identity inevitably assumed powerful racial dimensions. The market revolution and ensuing economic growth was made possible through racialized social relations. Furthermore, women's work whether inside or outside the home contributed to global economies and allowed men to work, but the "cult of domesticity" all but rendered women's labor invisible. Class underscores both gender and race, but is also interconnected with Protestantism during this time.

In addition to socio-economic class, religion worked to reinforce hegemony in the nineteenth century United States. The Puritanism of New England made way for a vociferous Protestant influence in constructing a national identity. The Protestant work ethic, so tightly bound to concepts of predestiny and good works, pushed the devout to strive for outward signs of salvation. Worldly goods symbolizing God's love thrust the nineteenth century United States toward modern capitalism at the expense of non-Protestants laboring classes locally and globally. While Protestantism was an impetus for economic growth and territorial expansion, it helped to reinforce the marginalized status of numerous men and women, both at home and abroad. With increasing and changing immigration in the nineteenth century United States, Protestantism became more closely tied to notions of identity, and intertwined with notions of Americanness. In order to deal with the influx of migrants and the changes they brought to the United States, educators and reformers clung to the idea of assimilation (Kaestle 1983). "True religion" in these

schoolbooks is patently limited to Protestantism despite the various religions of people living in the United States. Ruth Miller Elson (1964, 62) succinctly captures the relationship between Protestantism and nation-building in the United States:

> Thus the United States is a Protestant nation with a divinely appointed mission. As the modern Chosen People its inhabitants have a special motive for piety, and concomitantly they have a special motive for patriotism. American nationalism and religion are thoroughly interwoven; love of the American nation is a correlative of love of God.

The hegemony of Protestantism worked to marginalize women, particularly non-white and working-class women, by reinforcing a divinely inspired role deemed natural and essential.

Bronwen Walter (1997, 353) clarifies the relationship between gender and the nation when she explains that national identities are mediated largely through masculinist constructions of the public sphere. The concept of patriarchy is helpful here in deciphering the exploitation of women. Sylvia Walby (1990, 21) explains where such hegemonic forces of control come into play: household production, male violence against women, and patriarchal relations in waged work, the state, sexuality, and cultural institutions. In relation to the nation, four of Walby's structures (male violence against women, patriarchal relations in the state, sexuality, and cultural institutions) articulate women's oppression. Sexual control and repression are exercised through the language of nationalism. National membership is always gendered through control over reproduction, sexuality, and means of representation. Kandiyoti (1994, 388) argues, "the regulation of gender is central to the articulation of cultural identity and difference."

Men claim the prerogatives of the nation and nation-building, whereas women accept the obligation of nation and nation-building.

The nation, however, is not monolithic; while it is a heterosexual male construct, McDowell (1999, 187) clarifies, women nonetheless participate in carrying out patriarchal hierarchies and norms. Kandiyoti (1994, 378) explains how women can both participate in and become hostages to nationalist projects. And, Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis (1989, 7; 1992, 28) outline the ways women participate in national processes. Women are the "biological reproducers of nation's members," but they also help to reproduce boundaries, ideologies, and differences as well as participating in "national, economic, political, and military struggles." Despite their centrality to the nation, Kandiyoti (1994, 377) reminds us women are often relegated to the margins to help make clear the distinction between the nation and its "others." For example, in some instances, according to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1994, 94), a woman can become the object of protection from her own kind but, more importantly, protected *by* the masculinist nation.

It is important to note, however, that the very category "woman" has also come under fire by feminists. Chandra Mohanty (1994, 199), for example, claims that it is a simplistic monolith based on "the assumption of women as an already constituted and coherent group with identical interests and desires." And the label further perpetuates the project of othering non-Western women because it, most often, refers to Western women in particular. These nineteenth century geography schoolbooks construct women living in the United States as a monolithic entity; "American" women, according to these books, are white, middle-class, and lucky in comparison to women abroad or working-class

women or women of color living in the United States. While we recognize such identities as social constructions, they are also spatial constructions. John Paul Jones, Heidi Nast, and Susan Roberts (1997, xxix) explain in their introduction to *Thresholds in Feminist Geography*, "Difference is constituted by the concrete contexts within which bodies and identities are located." One goal of this research is to show how simplistic and, at times, inaccurate such a representation is. Again, the category "woman" only works when contextualized and historicized with other social divisions such as race and class.

The concept of motherhood helps to further illustrate the interconnectedness of race, class, and gender, since the construction of national identity includes particular versions of motherhood. As mothers are typically central to family well-being, Patricia Hill Collins (1999, 119) shows how specific constructions of motherhood permeate the "family ideal," making matters of race and class obvious. Working class women are presented as "unfit" to participate in the national processes as biological and ideological reproducers, cultural transmitters and signifiers, and participants in national struggles. For example, Walby's (1990, 21) first two categories addressing patriarchy, household production, and patriarchal relations in waged work, reinforce the need to deconstruct gender dichotomies. Particularly the private/public abstraction, according to Liz Bondi (1992), requires acknowledging that domestic arrangements and unpaid domestic labor are part of a broader system of economic production. Furthermore, "in the context of colonial production . . . the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow," Spivak (1994, 83) argues. This division of labor, whether on a national or international scale, is the result of nineteenth century imperialism. According to Spivak (1994, 83), "In the

interest of maintaining the circulation and growth of industrial capital, law and standardized education systems were developed." Only under particular, historical, sets of circumstances, Linda Nicholson (1986, 12) explains, does the public/private abstraction develop into distinct spheres.

Mohanty (1994, 207) stresses that these patriarchal structures must be further contextualized and related to other social divisions such as class and race because these constructed meanings serve power relations. They relate to gender identity, and are connected to further power relations of race and class as Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose (1994, 3) describe, "The elaboration of the private as a domestic haven of feminine grace and charm, and of the public as the arena of aggressive masculine competition, is increasingly seen as a development that enabled the bourgeoisie to distinguish themselves from other social groups." Experiences of women of color, however, have never fit this model as Patricia Hill Collins (1991, 47) explains. Blunt and Rose (1994, 4) remind us that, at least in the nineteenth century, the difference between public and private must also be seen as white, since "it was quite impossible for hegemonic discourses to acknowledge a black woman as a 'lady' in the post-Emancipation United States." Privileged white women living in the United States continue to be the standard by which women with diverse backgrounds are judged; as Collins (1999, 127) explains, "when it comes to being 'mothers of the nation,' race, class and citizenship status matter greatly."

The crucial point about racism, according to Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1992, 16), is that it is not just a set of beliefs or statements but the ability to impose those beliefs as hegemonic. Continually bombarded with particular lenses through which to view various segments of society, racism goes beyond mere representations into belief systems.

Instead of recognizing these constructions as just that--constructions--racial differences are presented as natural with inherent hierarchies. According to Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1992, 2), "Race is one way by which the boundary is to be constructed between those who can and those who cannot belong to a particular construction of a collectivity or population." Inclusion or exclusion determined by race is based on "immutable biological or physiognomic difference . . . but is always grounded on the separation of human populations by some notion of stock heredity of traits." Such superficial basis for categorizing people perpetuates the myth that women of color threaten this narrow version of national identity by producing a population that jeopardizes the maintenance of the United States as a white nation. Moreover, as Collins (1999, 127) explains, "standards used to assess the contributions of family members in White, heterosexual, married-couple households with children become foundational for assessing group contributions to national well-being overall."

Although there is only one species of humans (race is a social and historical construction and not a scientific division for humans) racism is blatant in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks. "Race may not be a fact, but racism most certainly is," states William Norton (2000, 246) who further explains how racism is the product of the nineteenth century European construction "of national identity, progress, and Social Darwinism." According to Norton (2000, 246), "the new doctrine of nationalism was supported by the idea of race, with group membership contingent upon such characteristics as language and skin color." As a means to "differentiate and dominate," Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1992, 15) explain how racism includes practices and images that "serve to deny full participation in economic, social, political and cultural life"

because "the supposed essence of difference is given a negative evaluation." So, while we recognize each variable, class, religion, gender, and race, as a social construction, we also recognize that they are socially real; all play a crucial role in national identity. Thus, the representations of these variables provide us with further clues as to how national identity was perpetuated in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks published in the United States.

## Representation

Through images depicted of both the United States and the world beyond, geography textbooks helped mold "Americans'" views of themselves by describing and defining the United Sates as well as by highlighting supposed differences between the United States and other parts of the world. While it may appear to be a debate over semantics, Spivak (1994, 70) articulates the subtleties of representation: representation as "speaking for" and representation as "re-presentation." In the first sense, representation as in politics or state formation and the law, Spivak argues must be recognized as related to but distinct from re-presentation as in art or philosophy within the theory of the Subject. In other words, both senses of representation suggest substitution but the latter has a stronger sense of substitution. In terms of the social construction of identity in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks, Spivak's term "re-presentation" reflects the substitution taking place in the books. Rather than speaking subjects, people in these books are silent, voyeuristic objects. Representing people as passive objects allows the textbook authors to enhance the national identity of the United States through stereotypical characterizations of various groups. As Lydia Mihelič Pulsipher (1997, 291) has observed in her work on verbal representation, "Far from being objective,

representations whether verbal or graphic are fashioned for particular ends; they are made to construct the world in particular ways for particular audiences."

In this dissertation, changes in representations or lack there of in the selected nineteenth century geography schoolbooks are addressed and analyzed. Even though Michael Apple and Linda Christian-Smith (1991, 10) conclude in their analysis of the evolution of textbooks over time that information in textbooks is seldom edited or removed and paramount ideological structures are rarely changed, there are subtle variations and alterations in these geography texts over the course of the nineteenth century, although the overall ideological message remains constant. Attributed to new teaching styles, different information about various places and people, and social changes in the United States, some of these changes, at times, reflect the larger social context of the United States, but more often reflect the social positions of the authors. Again, addressing changes or continuity in these books provides further insight into how the national identity of the United States was perpetuated and passed on to succeeding generations through the public education system. In addition to analyzing graphic and written representations and changes made to such constructions, analyzing information left out of the texts is equally important. Information omitted, whether purposely left out or not, tells us as much about messages being conveyed to students as do the graphic and written representations included in the books. Graphic representations, themselves, change over the course of the nineteenth century. Changes in style, content, and iconography help to enhance a particular view of the world and require further analysis.

The standards by which various groups are judged are recognized as social constructions, but they are socially real; nineteenth century specters continue to haunt us

despite one-hundred years of social and cultural change. Class, religion, gender, and race continue to be the basis by which national membership is determined. Delving into nineteenth century schoolbooks can help us to further understand the foundations for such beliefs.

# CHAPTER 4
# POLICY, EMPIRICISM, AND PUBLISHING

## The nineteenth century United States

School geography in the nineteenth century was well suited for the teaching methodology of the time. The Lancasterian system, emphasizing recitation, became the most widespread educational reform during the first thirty years of the nineteenth century as Carl Kaestle (1983) reminds us. Geography as a classification of climate, people, and places lent itself to a pedantic, catechismal style of learning. Joseph Mayer Rice (1969), an educational reformer, Charles Breasted (1943), an archaeologist, and Larry Cuban (1993), an educational historian, have remarked on memorization drills of geography lessons. Towards the end of the century, home geography, or relating lessons to the students' immediate vicinity, became mainstay (Cremin 1964). As far as importance placed on the study of geography, Susan Schulten (2001, 93) remarks, "Geography was also more commonly studied than history in the nineteenth century." According to David Tyack (1974, 47), geography averaged five-hundred hours of study out of a total seven-thousand instruction hours, and that geography was superceded only by arithmetic, reading, and spelling. Even a first-hand account of schooling in Kansas suggests geography played a considerable role in nineteenth century education following reading and arithmetic lessons (Tyack 1967, 220-225). Because geography was such a popular subject in the schools, it, most likely, influenced student understanding.

The authors of nineteenth century textbooks were themselves products of their times. The social, political, cultural, and economic conditions of the period not only affected educational policy, but the mindset of the authors was also influenced by their

milieu. In order to understand the material included or excluded from nineteenth century geography schoolbooks and the constructions of identity, it is necessary to appreciate the situation of the authors.

## From the pens and mouths of the powerful

From the onset of the founding of the United States, through the nineteenth century, the ideal of a homogeneous national identity was pursued. Despite the cultural, social, and economic transformations over the course of a century, a white, middle-class, masculinist identity remained the standard for comparison and emulation. This particular and limited identity reflects, in part, the goals, aspirations, and fears of the founders. In their attempts to reject what they saw as the corrupt traditions of Europe, they worked at the task of building a virtuous republic. This rejection of European models, Lawrence Cremin (1980, 3) writes, "implied a conscious act of creation, for the American character had yet to be defined, and the health and safety of the new nation depended on its proper definition." Men like Benjamin Rush and Noah Webster wrote indefatigably about the political and educational processes by which virtue could be disseminated throughout the republic. The development of a national character was their goal. Historians, like Ronald Takaki and educational historians such as Cremin, Carl Kaestle, and David Tyack have paid a great deal of attention to the works of Rush, Webster, and others, yet further observations are in order.

The conscious endeavor to construct a national identity is evident in Webster's plea in 1790, "You have now an interest of your own to augment and defend: you have an empire to raise and support by your exertions and a national character to establish and extend by your wisdom and virtues (quoted in Rudolph 1965, 77)." According to the

leaders of the day, such as Webster, Rush, and Thomas Jefferson, this version of republican virtue could be disseminated most easily through education, specifically "a truly American education" (Cremin 1980, 2-3) that would be "genuinely useful." A thoroughly American education could ameliorate their fears of diversity and corruption. George Washington claimed, "The more homogeneous our citizens can be made in these particulars, the greater will be our prospect of permanent union (quoted in Tyack 1966, 85)." Benjamin Rush, a highly acclaimed physician, also desired schools that would render the mass of people more homogeneous. The oft-quoted line from Rush, "I consider it as possible to convert men into republican machines. This must be done if we expect them to perform their parts properly in the great machine of the state (quoted in Rudolph 1965, 16-17)," attests to his desire for conformity and national integration.

Like Rush, Jefferson believed republicanism required a homogeneous population and that public education could help to disseminate knowledge and provide the foundations for order. Fearing the diversity that immigrants potentially presented to the new nation and exposure to various cultures if one studied abroad, Jefferson fastidiously endorsed a particular American education, as evidenced by his appeal, "Cast your eye over America: who are the men of most learning, of most eloquence, most beloved by their country and most trusted and promoted by them? They are those who have been educated among them, and whose manners, morals and habits are perfectly homogeneous with those of the country (quoted in Tyack 1967, 85)." So, while these Revolutionary leaders were laboring to define a new national character they believed could be diffused through education, they were developing a definition of nationhood that could potentially exclude the mass of people from participating in the nation. The establishment of a

national identity at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century had significant implications for class, gender, and, particularly, race despite the rhetoric of freedom and dignity.

Debates over slavery, especially the Lincoln-Douglas debates, provide us with some interesting insights into perceptions of race during the nineteenth century. Lincoln, so often depicted as a racial egalitarian (despite his suggestions of colonizing blacks outside the United States) professed economic autonomy for African Americans. Stephen A. Douglas, on the other hand, endorsed white privilege. Eric Foner (1998, 92) quotes Douglas as saying, "I believe this government was made . . . by white men for the benefit of white men and their prosperity for ever, and I am in favor of confining citizenship to white men . . . instead of conferring it upon Negroes, Indians, and other inferior races." It was Douglas' attitude that was most popular in the nineteenth century.

Even after slavery was abolished and segregationist practices promulgated in the country, some African Americans presented themselves as accomodationists. Booker T. Washington, addressing the 1895 Atlanta Exposition, said in regards to segregation, "In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress." Washington's accomodationist rhetoric provided plenty of ammunition for white supporters of segregation, and attests to the power of hegemony to convince people to speak against their own best interests, if, in fact, Washington truly believed in segregation.

Nineteenth century America was also a challenge for the thousands of Chinese immigrating to California. Voluntarily coming to California as free laborers, the number of Chinese rose from 325 in 1849 to 400,000 by 1930 (Takaki 1998, 129). Ninety-five

percent were men, who migrated for a variety of reasons, including seeking sanctuary from floods, harsh economic conditions, turmoil from the Red Turban Rebellion and the British Opium Wars; most were also motivated by the potential opportunities for prosperous employment in the United States.

While, at first, the Chinese appeared to be welcomed, anti-Chinese sentiment soon arose and was reinforced by the writing of reformer Henry George (Takaki 2000, 240-246). References to the so-called stagnant culture of the Chinese are frequently referred to in nineteenth century American geography schoolbooks. Nathaniel Dwight (1802, 94) says the Chinese are "so attached to ancient customs that they disdain any improvements." Or, as Jacques Redway and Russell Hinman (1897, 115) wrote regarding Chinese, "yet until recently they have made little progress, but lived very much as their ancestors did thousands of years ago." The later statements may have been influenced by George's article in an 1869 issue of the *New York Tribune*, where he said the Chinese at one time possessed much knowledge but that a "strange petrification" fell upon them. George declared the Chinese to be more of a threat to national identity than African Americans because he believed the Chinese could not be assimilated into American culture. Takaki (2000, 246) concludes that George's anti-Chinese sentiment culminated in the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. It is evident that the works of powerful men during the nineteenth century had substantial implications for constructions of race.

## Policy

The desire to construct a unified national identity by excluding and "othering" particular groups of people living in the United States is evident in official governmental documents and political practices of the time. One of the earliest and most blatant forms

of exclusion lies in the Naturalization Law of 1790. This law required two years residence in the United States and that the individual be "free" and white. So, citizenship was reserved for white individuals, *literally* excluding African Americans, Native Americans, and all other "non-white" cultural groups from participating in the nation. Of course, the right to vote, arguably one of the most important aspects of participating in the nation, was, and continues to be, reserved for citizens of the United States as declared in the Constitution. While the Naturalization Law of 1790 guaranteed citizenship for "free white persons" only, it also had specific implications for particular white cultural groups. The original two year residency requirement was raised to five years in 1795 and fourteen years in 1798 (Dinnerstein and Reimers 1999). In 1802, it was reduced back to five years, where it has remained ever since. The increase in residency requirements was implemented at varying times to halt naturalization of certain cultural groups, again with the purpose of reducing voters of particular ethnicity. For example, the increase from five to fourteen years in 1798 was enacted to reduce Irish and French political influence because of the mass influx of French and Irish to the United States in the late eighteenth century (James Morton Smith 1971, 105).

After the Civil War, the 1790 Act was successfully challenged on behalf of freed blacks and formerly enslaved African Americans, yet eligibility for citizenship for Asian immigrants became increasingly problematic. Scholars (Wollenberg 1976; Takaki 1993, 1994, 1998, 2000; Okihiro 1994; Nieto 1996; Weinberg 1997) argue that Asian immigrants became the most significant "other" in terms of national participation. The Chinese were perceived as an economic threat in that the competition for labor would drive down wages. This threat was countered by stereotypes of Chinese as "heathens,

savages, sensuous, and depraved," (Takaki 2000, 217) and the stereotypes can also be seen in the geography textbooks of the time. Jacob Willetts (1815, 76) describes Chinese as "pagans, indolent, and servile." Categorization within the geography texts also helps in defining difference while at the same time it gives the difference a negative valuation. For example, Jesse Olney (1832, 50) includes the Chinese in the *civilized state* (emphasis original) of society where "men are acquainted with the arts and sciences, and derive their subsistence from agriculture, manufactures and commerce." Olney constructs four divisions, savage, half-civilized, civilized, and enlightened, according to "habits of life and state of improvement." So while some credit is granted to the Chinese, they are still degraded in comparison to white men and women living in the United States (which group falls into the "enlightened" category according to Olney). Undoubtedly such lessons in textbooks helped to create the climate for the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. In this act, Congress prohibited immigration of Chinese to the United States and denied citizenship to Chinese already living in the United States. As a result many Chinese were deported.

Another example of government policy aimed at excluding and "othering" is California legislation from 1852 targeting the Chinese. According to Ronald Takaki (1993, 195), legislation enacted a foreign miner's tax of three dollars per month from every miner who did not desire to become a citizen. This was a conundrum for the thousands of Chinese miners considering they were not allowed to become citizens according to the 1790 Naturalization Act. The tax resulted in a five million dollar profit for the state of California which assumed the fruits of labor from the Chinese miners.

Again, the symbolic significance for the United States of this legislation is a presumption of superiority over Asia.

Furthermore, while the Naturalization Law of 1790 granted citizenship to limited groups of white men, we cannot disregard the fact that women's citizenship was based on their husband's status until 1922, when women's citizenship was finally separated from their husbands. So, while claims such as "All the states send men to Washington to make laws" from Alexis Everett Frye's *Elements of Geography* (1894, 69) celebrate the ideal of freedom and virtue, Frye fails to recognize the numerous individuals and groups excluded from this process.

Beyond policies of naturalization, there were numerous policies with pernicious effects for these already "othered" groups. African Americans in this country have long endured discriminatory attitudes and practices. While debates raged during the first half of the nineteenth century in support of and against slavery, African Americans were denied economic participation in the nation. Although nineteenth century American geography schoolbooks depict slavery as an institution particular to the South, northern blacks experienced racial discrimination and segregation as well. Samuel Griswold Goodrich (1850, 63) explains that in the southern states, "The lands are chiefly cultivated by negro slaves, who form about one third of the population." In his description of the New England states (1850, 54), life in the North is presented as more equitable, "This part of the country is celebrated for its schools, and its manufactures; for the industry, the intelligence, sobriety, and good order, of the people." And, like Frye's failure to recognize the limitations of participation, Goodrich commits a similar error in describing the government of the Untied States as all-inclusive, "The inhabitants of this country are

not governed by kings and princes, as are the people of most other countries; but *they have a government made by themselves* (emphasis original)."

Denied the right to vote, repressed economically, and forced into menial or slave labor, African Americans were subject to on-going discriminatory practices. For example, the Fugitive Slave Law, enacted in 1850 (Sterling 1984, 165; Foner 1998, 87), gave unprecedented power to slave owners. *Any* white man could claim *any* black man was his runaway slave. Another example was the 1857 *Dred Scott* decision that denied blacks citizenship. Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger B. Taney (Foner 1998, 75) declared African Americans "had no rights which the white man was bound to respect." Even after the Civil War (in which more than 60,000 black Union soldiers died or were missing at the wars end) and the abolition of slavery, African Americans continued to experience racism and discrimination. By the end of the nineteenth century, Jim Crow laws defined the place of African Americans. Segregationist practices were further reinforced with the *Plessy* v. *Ferguson* Supreme Court ruling in 1896. Racial segregation was mandated with the "separate but equal" doctrine under the thin guise of racial equality despite the fact that facilities for blacks were always inferior. It took until the last half of the twentieth century for many of these overt discriminatory policies toward African Americans to change.

Nineteenth century America was no more hospitable to Native Americans than any other non-white cultural group. Native American culture was perceived as a threat to the constructed American national identity because of the vast differences between cultures, but, more importantly, white interest in Indian land spurred a number of political and governmental initiatives that were rooted in economics and self-perception. The

economic transformations that occurred over the course of the century provide much of the impetus behind the treatment of Native Americans. Takaki (2000, 78) and Foner (1998, 77) explain how the expansion of the nation was made possible by the removal of Indians and the burgeoning of black slavery. The construction of an American national identity coincided with attempts to define the situation and privilege of white Americans, but with psychological effects as Susan Scheckel (1998, 5) explains, "Nineteenth century America had to account in moral terms, for the fact that the nation was built on the graves of Indians."

Even after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, Jefferson's rhetoric concerning Native Americans was paradoxical. Takaki (2000, 62) and Mary E. Young (1971, 165) show how Jefferson, on the one hand, allowed those Indians that "chose" civilization to remain where they were, while those who resisted would be asked to re-settle west of the Mississippi. But, despite these supposedly generous measures, Indians remained subject to removal or even extinction. Government policies denied Native Americans citizenship and basic civil rights even though they were protected by law to some extent. For example, the 1802 Indian Trade and Intercourse Act allowed for land cessions only by treaty with a tribe and provided that federal law, not state law, operated in Indian territory. Despite this attempt by the federal government to protect some Indian rights, in practice, the 1802 Act was ignored. Even after the Supreme Court ruled the state had no right to extend its laws over the Cherokee nation in *Worcester* v. *Georgia* (Takaki 2000, 97; Young 1971, 167; Scheckel 1998, 6), President Andrew Jackson failed to enforce the decision. Jackson's continual push for the removal of Native Americans to the west of the Mississippi precipitated the death of more than 4000 Cherokee refugees (Takaki

2000, 100). Further government acts, such as the Indian Appropriation Act of 1871 and the Dawes Act of 1887, really went beyond the allotment of land. Takaki (2000, 189) concludes the purpose of the governmental policies were threefold: make Indian lands available for white settlement, destroy the political power of Indian tribes, and assimilate the Indians. Despite the numerous deaths of Native Americans, at the hands of the European Americans, through battle, murder, disease, or relocation, Indians were blamed for their own ruin, specifically for not adopting the ways of European Americans.

In nineteenth century American geography schoolbooks, Native Americans are represented as the mythic "noble savages" who, because of their inability or refusal to adopt Euro-American customs, are quickly disappearing. Native Americans are represented in contrast to the ideal national identity constructed during the nineteenth century as Samuel Griswold Goodrich's (1836, 81) description attests, "The savages retired and civilization spread rapidly over the country. They are at best, however, but a miserable people, and are more ready to imbibe the vices than the virtues which belong to the society around them." Discriminatory attitudes such as these were further reinforced with supposedly scientific research of the time.

## Science

Additional sources confirming a national identity constructed by excluding and "othering" include conjectural scientific writings. Research, presuming to be scientific provided further evidence for perpetuating racist attitudes in the United States during the nineteenth century. Samuel Morton, a Philadelphia doctor, "discovered" the cranial capacity of whites to be larger than that of African Americans and wrongly concluded that larger cranial capacity somehow implied innate superiority. He published his

findings in 1839 in *Crania Americana.* Morton assumed brain size correlated with intelligence, so he ranked the five supposed races, popularly represented in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks, according to cranial capacity. He concluded that white Europeans have the highest capacity while Chinese ranked second, Southeast Asians and Polynesians third, American Indians fourth, and Africans and Australian aborigines fifth.

The influence of "scientific" sources such as Morton's writing is obvious in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks. Generally, the books divide humans into five races based on physical characteristics, particularly skin color. The American Anthropological Association's Statement on "Race," adopted from a position paper authored by Audrey Smedley (1999), helps to explain the long-standing tradition of dividing humans into various "races" and helps to show how this division today requires careful delineation. While we now know there is greater variation within supposed "racial" groups than between them, and that the physical variation in human species have meaning only in regards to social constructions imposed on them, "race" in the nineteenth century "subsumed a growing ideology of inequality devised to rationalize European attitudes and treatment of the conquered and enslaved people." The statement concludes, "Given what we know about the capacity of normal humans to achieve and function within any culture, we conclude that present-day inequalities between so-called 'racial' groups are not consequences of their biological inheritance but products of historical and contemporary social, economic, educational, and political circumstances." Polygenism, the belief that human races were considered to be separate species, has long since been refuted and Morton's results, in particular, were manipulated and doctored. In *The Mismeasure of Man* (1981), Stephen Jay Gould writes that brain size more closely relates

to height, regardless of race, and that Morton conveniently used skulls from women (typically physically smaller individuals) to lower the figures for specific groups to support his theory.

Variation in cranial capacity between men and women had further implications for gender perceptions and relations. Dr. Charles Meigs (quoted in Shryock 1960, 121) claimed that a woman had "a head almost too small for intellect but just big enough for love" perpetuated the myth that woman's place was in the home. While there is a rough correlation between brain size in relation to overall body size and intelligence, scientists caution that that correlation is very loose. Professor of Neural Sciences, Stanley Finger (1994, 305), explains: "The idea that there were differences in the gross anatomy of male and female brains did not hold up well in the twentieth century. In particular, the idea that female brains were more fetal, simpler, or more simian proved to be without solid scientific foundation." Gendered stereotypes of women's perceived roles such as that set forth by Meigs are commonplace in nineteenth century American geography schoolbooks even though we now know such stereotypes to be social constructions.

## Popular culture

While these nineteenth century scientific writings may not have reached the general public, we can see their effects in popular culture from the time. The stereotypes and biases perpetuated by science show up in attitudes expressed in such common household literature as *Harper's Weekly*. Four examples from 1859 demonstrate the gendered stereotype of women's perceived roles. The October 8, 1859 issue of *Harper's Weekly* (647) describes Dinah Maria Mulock, an English author whose stories flooded the pages of *Harper's* from 1861 to 1865:

> Miss Muloch (sic) sustains the impression you derive from her books-modest, sensible, sincere. She is tall, slender, with fine blue eyes, light-brown hair, clear English complexion, and a face lighted up by sensibility. There is nothing of the strong-minded air about her, that indefinable, unmistakable disease with which so many literary ladies are afflicted. She is feminine, as God meant woman to be, and has a soft, low voice, which is a very pleasant thing.

The detailed physical description is common in both *Harper's Weekly* and geography schoolbooks of the time. Maybe limited access to photographs or other visual images revealing physical attributes created a demand for such descriptions, but what this particular description really provides is a standard by which all other women should be judged and compared, and not just other "literary ladies." Furthermore, the so-called "affliction" referred to here is the nineteenth century feminism underlying the woman's rights movement. Women were expected to "work" but only within a specific sphere best suited for their supposed "natural" inclinations and roles.

The definition of woman's proper role, according to educational historian, Carl Kaestle (1983, 84), was central to the ideology of domesticity: women were to provide sanctuary for their husbands, "manage a healthy and frugal household," and, most importantly, "nurture and instruct" their children. Emphasis on woman's "proper" sphere was popularized by such influential figures of the time as Catharine Beecher (1841) and Horace Mann (1853). But, again, we can see such attitudes in *Harper's Weekly,* a popular periodical that most likely reached more homes in the United States than did the words of Mann or Beecher. An article from the November 5, 1859 (706) issue argued for female education, particularly female medical education, when referring to the first

female physician in the United States, Elizabeth Blackwell's visit to Florence Nightingale. The article explains that women need medical education to care for one another but, more importantly, to care for their children, "Every woman, to be a wife or mother, requires some knowledge of medicine." Reinforcing the "domestic haven" as woman's "true" and "natural" sphere, the article provides another standard for comparing the ideally constructed woman.

What *Harper's Weekly*, in many instances, fails to acknowledge is the strong push for women's rights during the nineteenth century. Even in a review of "Women and Work" by Caroline H. Dall, a *Harper's* (December 31, 1859, 835) columnist lauds the fact that "the question is not treated by her in the manner of the Woman's Rights Convention; but by a calm presentation of copious facts, based upon very careful study and observation." "The question" the columnist is referring to is whether women should or should not work. While the reviewer acknowledges Dall's descriptions of women's work and the lack of respect that ensues, the columnist degrades the Woman's Rights Convention by implying their claims are *not* carefully studied or observed, and that they are presented in a less than "calm" fashion (Not that women could be expected to be calm because the nineteenth century stereotype presented women as inferior to men, fickle, absent of thought and logic, and incapable of reasoning). Moreover, we can question the "careful study" of the article about Dall because the author missed the fact that Dall *was* actively involved in a variety of woman's rights campaigns; Dall helped coordinate and addressed the 1855 and the 1859 Woman's Rights Conventions in Boston and co-edited *Una*, the first magazine devoted to woman's rights in the United States.

From the glowing reviews of *Harper's*, included in its own pages, we should not be surprised by such writings or attitudes. Harper's touts its own conservatism, as do advertisements for the magazine disguised as reviews contained within its own pages. The *New Orleans Christian Advocate* (July 2, 1859, 431) claims *Harper's* is "Sound in religion, conservative in politics, elegant in taste, varied in matter, overrunning with sympathy and humor, and guided all the time by a sturdy common sense, it has no rival." From what we know now, the private, as a haven of feminine grace and charm, and the public, as the domain of masculinity, only worked for privileged white women and men living in the United States; the vast majority of both genders had to work for wages outside the home (Blunt and Rose 1994, 3).

Life during the nineteenth century certainly may have been privileged for many white women. Despite discrimination, uncertainty, and prevailing sexist attitudes, white women living in the United States were constructed, in nineteenth century American geography schoolbooks as well as in *Harper's Weekly,* as privileged in comparison to non-white, non-middle class women, living in the United States or elsewhere around the world. When John Ward, Minister of the United States, visited Peking in 1859, his travels and observations regularly made the pages of *Harper's*. Ward's description of women in Peking from December 10, 1859 (790) provides one example of how foreign women were "othered":

> What a *splendid* sight is a well-formed, graceful, and well-dressed woman! What a *beautiful* sight is the aged grandmother, with her white cap, outspread Bible, and gold spectacles moistened by the Christian's tear! But how revolting is the woman when she comes before us clothed in both moral and physical deformity; a life-long stranger to

> cold water and a piece of property that must be carefully watched by its owner to guard against deception (emphasis original).

Not only is this "observation" sexist, it also reveals the prevailing racist attitudes of the time.

Takaki (2000) traces prevailing racist attitudes toward Chinese immigrants in other popular publications from the nineteenth century. In "A Plea for Chinese Labor" in *Scribner's Monthly* (July 1871 vol. 2 286-90), Abby Richardson proposes that Chinese domestics could alleviate the burden of housework for middle-class wives so they could better perform their duty as "ornaments of society." Another example is in the 1869 *New York Tribune* article, "The Chinese on the Pacific Coast" by Henry George, referred to earlier in this chapter. Ten years after the *Tribune* article, George's book, *Progress and Poverty,* was published by one of the larger schoolbook publishers, W. H. Appleton (Takaki 2000, 247). Here, George outlined the potential stagnation of industry in the United States by the employment of cheap Chinese labor. As the Chinese had halted progress in their homeland, so could they affect progress in the United States. What George failed to take into account was the large amount of revenue the government reaped by employing Chinese labor this revenue was the result of government policy taxing foreign miners previously discussed in this chapter. By 1870, Takaki (1993, 195) says, "California had collected five million dollars from the Chinese, a sum representing twenty-five to fifty percent of all state revenue."

## Print-capitalism and the publishing connection

The construction of a unified national identity coincided with the expansion of schooling as well as publishing which affected economic growth during the nineteenth

century in the United States. In *Pillars of the Republic* (1983, 65), Carl Kaestle explains the relationship between expansive capitalism, literacy, and publication as all three helped to foster and enhance commercial communications networks: "There was a reciprocal relationship between literacy and publication. The more widespread the printed word, the more schooling was encouraged; the more literacy increased, the more market there was for newspapers, almanacs, periodicals, and books." Benedict Anderson further explains the connection between the expansion of publishing and the nineteenth century construction of a national identity. Anderson (1983, 61) claims a northern American nation could not be imagined until the arrival of print-capitalism. Book publishing, one form of capitalist enterprise, "provided the technical means for 're-presenting' the kind of imagined community that is the nation," (Anderson 1983, 25). Book publishing became a massive capitalist enterprise during the nineteenth century in the United States, and while the economic gain is important here, the ideas expressed in the books (particularly schoolbooks) are crucial for the construction of a national identity in the United States.

Noah Webster (quoted in Jonathan Messerli 1967, 420-421), recognized the possibility of instilling in American children "an inviolable attachment to their own country." Webster is credited with attempting to inculcate a common national identity in school children through his *Blue-Back Spellers* and his standardization of a specific American language in his dictionary, but Webster was not alone in this mission. Textbook publishers fully supported the request for schoolbooks written specifically for students in the United States, not only to throw off the shackles of European influence in textbooks, but for profit. With the growth of public schooling, libraries, and literacy

during the nineteenth century, schoolbooks took precedence in publishing as evidenced by estimates of textbook production (Tebbel 1972, 1:222; Lehmann-Haupt 1951, 123). From 1820 to 1850, schoolbook production increased from thirty percent to forty-four percent of the book publishing industry. The demand for school textbooks continued to grow until it reached seventy-five percent of the entire publishing industry where it remains today. So, while schoolbooks made-up the largest portion of book production, the publishing companies, whether small and localized or large and widely influential, anxiously pursued production and sale of educational publications.

## Publishers

The schoolbooks used in this research were produced by a variety of publishers, some more well-known and prestigious than others, and all but three published in the northeast. The most prolific of the publishing companies were located in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, while Cincinnati and St. Paul housed three of the companies included here. But, as the nineteenth century progressed, the publishing industry consolidated many of its competing companies into the powerful American Book Company. In May, 1890, Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor and Company, D. Appleton and Company, A. S. Barnes and Company, and Van Antwerp, Bragg and Company incorporated as the American Book Company with over four million dollars in capital (Tebbel 1972, 1:335; Lehmann-Haupt 1951, 237). And, by 1892, Tebbel (1972, 1:571) tells us the firm had over seven thousand textbooks available including eighty-eight geography textbooks.

The second half of the nineteenth century began to see larger publishing companies focusing more specifically on manufacturing and distribution. For example,

A. S. Barnes and Company in New York may have been the first firm to establish itself primarily as an educational publisher. A. S. Barnes and Company helped change the focus and direction of publishing educational materials. Not only did they sell directly to schools rather than through schoolbook agents, they also designed a plan to sell a complete series of books beginning with an elementary edition with succeeding books leading to an advanced edition (Tebbel 1972, 1:296).

Another major late nineteenth century contributor to schoolbook publishing, including geography textbooks, was D. Appleton and Company which also published major scientific works of the time including Darwin's *The Origin of Species* as well as publications by Spencer and Huxley (Tebbel 1972, 1:291). The connection to science publishing is important because of the ideology promoted by the scientific claims found in these works. If the publisher is promoting racial and gender hierarchies with works by Darwin, Spencer, and Huxley, then it only follows that the publisher would press authors to include the latest in "scientific breakthroughs" in the schoolbooks they wrote.

Of course, there were other companies publishing textbooks in the nineteenth century, but these are a few of the publishers of the specific geography schoolbooks used in this research. As we will see, the variety of authors is no less problematic in that some are more well-known while others remain almost anonymous.

## Authors

Arguably one of the most well-known of early geography authors in the United States is the Reverend Jedidiah Morse (Moore and Wilcox 1932, 40; Holtz 1925, 324). Regarded by many as the "father" of American geography, Morse wrote what is considered "the first really American geography" (Holtz 1925, 324). In 1784, Morse

wrote *Geography Made Easy*, which by 1817 was in its nineteenth edition. It is rather encyclopedic in style and follows a question-and-answer format and there are no illustrations. This is typical of geography schoolbooks until the 1830s when illustrations became more commonplace.

The early geography textbook authors in the United States other than Morse, used in this study, are lesser known. Nathaniel Dwight, Elijah Parish, Daniel Adams, and Jacob Willetts wrote geography schoolbooks in the first third of the nineteenth century, yet little is known about them. Nathaniel Dwight remains the most obscure.

The Reverend Elijah Parish is mentioned as a "co-partner" to Morse in an advertisement in *The American Universal Geography* authored by Morse (1805) and only a sample page from Parish's *A New System of Geography* (1810) is included in an early book on geography methods by Frederick Holtz (1925, 326). But, we do know Parish published three books with Morse (Wilson and Fiske 1888, 4:647).

Daniel Adams, like Parish, is allotted a sample page in Holtz (1925, 329), but his textbook is described by Moore and Wilcox (1932, 40) as being in general use prior to 1860 and "extremely formal and stilted." While Adams, a graduate of Dartmouth, opened a select school and wrote geography schoolbooks, he is better known for his arithmetic texts (Wilson and Fiske 1888, 1:13).

As with Adams, Jacob Willetts' book is grouped with pre-1860 texts by Moore and Wilcox (1932, 40) and further described as "encyclopedic in scope and pedantic in style." The catechism style of Willetts' text is briefly mentioned by Holtz (1925, 330) as a form of resistance to the new grading of geography schoolbooks for younger students which included maps and visual images. Willetts attended Friends' boarding school in

New York where he later became the head teacher (Wilson and Fiske 1888, 6:518). He has been acknowledged as an accomplished mathematician who authored arithmetic textbooks as well as geography schoolbooks.

Jesse Olney is generally more well-known (or, at least, prominent enough to make the pages of *Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography*). Olney was an active educator as a teacher, principal, and author. He has been credited with revolutionizing geography instruction (Wilson and Fiske 1888, 4:579), and in 1832, in the preface to *A Practical System of Modern Geography* (1832, 1) he, himself, explained how much more suitable than previous methods his approach to geography was for younger learners. Olney's proposed method, also called "home geography," purports to engage the young learner by adapting geography "to the natural progress of the youthful mind" (Olney 1832, 1). He proposes that the child begin with what has been deemed local and familiar, expanding, over time, through additional lessons, to the distant and less familiar or unknown. While Olney may have been credited by some with such a revolutionary approach, this credit fails to recognize the influence of Pestalozzi's child psychology of the 1830s. For example, a similar approach can be seen in the textbooks of Samuel Griswold Goodrich.

Samuel Griswold Goodrich lacked the educational experience of Olney, receiving only a "scant formal education," yet he was a prolific author of children's books and textbooks in the nineteenth century (Schramm 1999, 265). Goodrich worked for a publishing company before becoming an author himself. While his early books follow in the tradition of Malte-Brun in France, as evidenced by the title of his 1836 textbook, *The Malte-Brun School Geography*, and incorporate home geography. Goodrich is better

known for his Peter Parley books, such as *Peter Parley's Geography for Beginners* (1850). Goodrich, like many of the schoolbook authors of the time, believed most educational works for children to be unsuitable, and he was determined to write his own. Peter Parley is a fictional character created by Goodrich to accompany children through adventures and instruction. Meant to be informative and entertaining, Goodrich like Olney, advocated home geography, illustrations, and language suitable for younger learners to enhance geography instruction.

Samuel Augustus Mitchell, a teacher in his early years, turned to writing geography textbooks after becoming dissatisfied with the books then in use (Wilson and Fiske 1888, 4:346; Malone 1934, 61). While this seems to be a common thread for these authors, Mitchell expanded his work to include geography manuals and maps for use outside of schools. The demand for his textbooks became so great that forty-thousand copies were sold annually.

A few authors from the middle of the nineteenth century achieved scant, if any, recognition of their geography schoolbooks. Roswell Smith and Joseph Hutchins Colton remain almost unknown except for Holtz's (1925, 332) description of their schoolbooks as quite formal in presentation with emphasis on classification and systemization. We do know, however, that J. H. Colton was a cartographer who founded the Colton mapping firm in New York. He was later succeeded in his work by his son George Woolworth Colton. James Monteith's textbooks receive a similar description by Holtz (1925, 332), however, Tebbel (1972, 1:297) tells us the publisher A. S. Barnes and Company expanded its list of schoolbooks in the 1850s, with James Monteith's being the most

notable, and by 1865, Monteith's four book series surpassed two million in sales. Still, we know little about these authors' positions in society.

Daniel G. Brinton, who co-authored *Primary Geography* (1870) with Adolf Von Steinwehr, graduated from Yale University and Jefferson Medical College (Wilson and Fiske 1888, 1:377). He was a surgeon who made regular contributions to medical journals and he later became a professor of ethnology and archaeology. He has been credited with expanding awareness of the languages and cultures of Native Americans, yet he found the time to co-author geography schoolbooks as well. Interestingly enough, his treatment of Native Americans in the schoolbooks is no less racist or derogatory than those written by authors less familiar with these cultures.

There are two female authors included in this research, Mary Lucy Hall and Sarah Sophia Cornell. Hall seemingly never existed except in the pages of her own text. We know from the preface of Hall's (1885) book that she was a teacher of six to ten year olds. Her book received glowing recommendations from the likes of George Emerson, Elizabeth Peabody, and Mrs. Horace Mann. Two further recommendations provide additional, yet limited information about Hall. Eben S. Stearns, principal of the Albany Female Academy, while complimenting Hall's text, explains that Hall, a former pupil at the West Newton State Normal School, is the daughter of a leading journalist (1885, 5). Nathaniel Allen, principal of the West Newton English and Classical School, testifies that he knew Hall as a teacher. Beyond these recommendations, Mary Lucy Hall does not appear in written records.

Sarah S. Cornell, on the other hand, received brief attention in a recent article by Sharon E. Pittser (1999). Pittser's article focuses on the little known contributions of

women to geography from 1783 to 1932. While Cornell is summed up in only a brief paragraph, at least she is recognized. Pittser (1999, 303) explains that Cornell wrote ten geography schoolbooks from 1855 to 1878 and that several editions were translated into other languages. The preface to *Cornell's Primary Geography* (1875) notes that Cornell, as a public school teacher, felt the need to write her own textbook to enhance understanding of geography because previous texts had confused student and teacher. Again, the common theme among authors of needing to clarify geography by writing their own book comes through.

Alexis Everett Frye makes a similar statement regarding the need to organize geography so it is more suitable to students needs. From the title page of Frye's books (1894; 1895), we know he was the former superintendent of schools in Cuba and the author of several geography schoolbooks. Holtz (1925, 337) explains that as a result of changes in knowledge on physiography the geographies from the end of the nineteenth century emphasized physical geography.

Jacques W. Redway and Russell Hinman are included with Frye in Holtz's description of late nineteenth century texts. Redway and Hinman were both normal school teachers (Holtz 1925, 337; Wilcox and Fiske 1888, 5:206), and according to Wilcox and Fiske's account, Redway had extensive experience in geography, as a traveler, teacher, and author.

While this dissertation focuses on the construction of identity in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks, it is necessary to recognize the role of both the author and publisher in this construction. Their experience and position in society shines through in their depictions of the world around them, whether familiar or unfamiliar. The

following chapters, analyzing geography schoolbooks, will make the authors' influences evident.

# CHAPTER 5
# NATION BUILDING

Geography schoolbooks published in the first three decades of the nineteenth century are analyzed in this chapter. The schoolbooks included in this chapter are *A Short but Comprehensive System of the Geography of the World* (1802) by Nathaniel Dwight, *A Comprehensive System of Universal Geography* (1807) and *A New System of Modern Geography* (1812) by Elijah Parish, *An Easy Grammar of Geography* (1815) by Jacob Willetts, *Geography Made Easy* (1817) by Jedidiah Morse, *A New System of Geography* (1822) by Jedidiah Morse and Sidney Edwards Morse, and *Geography* (1827) by Daniel Adams. The books are similar in approach, methodology, and content. An emphasis on nation building is evident throughout these books, and the authors, generally, highlight this civic purpose when explaining their particular approaches to studying geography. Only one of the seven schoolbooks analyzed has visual images, and perhaps the general omission of graphics helps to explain the emphasis on verbally describing people's physical characteristics. Thus attention here is devoted to the written text.

## Approach

Early in the century geography was not a required subject of study in the United States. And, since geography had yet to gain a permanent place as a school subject, the authors stress the importance of studying it. Answering his own question as to the advantages of studying geography, Nathaniel Dwight (1802, 207) explains:

> Geography is a science highly entertaining and important. It opens to our view much of the wisdom and goodness of the creator, in making various and bountiful provision for his creatures, in appointing them their residence in different parts of the globe, and suiting their capacities to their

> receptive circumstances. It teaches us that mankind are one great family, though different in their complexions, situations and habits. It promotes social intercourse and mutual happiness.

Thus, Dwight's rationale, while steeped in Christianity, suggests geography is worth studying for human understanding.

Elijah Parish (1807, preface) draws a connection between studying geography and obligation to the nation:

> Where every man has some influence on the proceedings of the government; where every man of talents and education may be a candidate for offices of trust and profit, to obtain particular information concerning the several States, their relative importance and interest, is a duty we owe to our beloved country.

For Parish, studying geography means learning about the world (and the United States) and thus learning will bolster patriotism and commitment to the nation.

Jedidiah Morse's proposed purposes for studying geography through the use of his schoolbooks are threefold: duty to the nation, rejection of thought and manners carried over from Great Britain, and lack of other suitable geography schoolbooks. The preface begins, "No national government holds out to its subjects so many alluring motives to obtain an accurate knowledge of their own country, and of its various interests, as that of the United States of America (Morse 1817, iii)." Morse further explains how the study of geography has long been neglected in the states because "our modes of thinking" were carried over from Great Britain. He concludes the preface by again stressing attachment to the nation, and that he as the author, "has endeavored to accommodate it [his schoolbook] to the use of schools, as a reading-book, that our youth

of both sexes . . . might imbibe an acquaintance with their country, and an attachment to its interests . . . with usefulness to their country." Repeatedly, we see the connection to nation emphasized as a civic purpose of the textbooks.

The authors' perceived desire for satisfactory schoolbooks is another reason for authors pitching their own books. These nineteenth century authors repeatedly claim existing books were insufficient. Jacob Willetts gives no reason(s) for studying geography, but his explanation as to why his particular book should be used foreshadows thinking during the rest of the nineteenth century. When referring to other geography schoolbooks, Willetts (1815, preface) writes, "He has found none which his experience has not taught him to consider as defective."

Daniel Adams is the exception to nineteenth century geography schoolbook authors. No where in *Geography: or, A Description of the World* does Adams provide any reason(s) for studying geography or for using his book. Perhaps his already established role as a textbook author, particularly arithmetic textbooks, allowed him and his publisher to forego the sales pitch.

By 1822, Morse (iii) in *A New System of Geography*, co-authored by his son, Sidney Edwards Morse, explains how geography is less precise than geometry because of the "imperfect state of our knowledge" and "the nature of the subject." But, despite the admitted lack of precision and complexity of geographical knowledge, the authors stress arranging "facts" as to aid the memory through classifications. Whether Morse and his son recognized this contradiction or not, they are really encouraging here is simplifying rather complex information into brief questions-and-answers for rote memorization and recitation.

## Teaching methodology

Another commonality is the catechism style or question-and-answer method of learning in these textbooks. Comments from authors concerning this approach are typically included in the preface. Dwight (1802), in the preface, claims a catechism style is "comprehensive and easily understood by children," and he strictly follows his recommended methodology. Presented in a question-and-answer format, Dwight briefly addresses the following: situation, extent, boundaries, square miles, divisions, climate, soil, mountains, rivers, lakes, metals/minerals, vegetation, animals, number of inhabitants, characteristics of inhabitants, customs and diversions, dress, marriage, religion, funerals, language, state of learning, universities, capitals, cities, curiosities, commerce/manufacturing, government, revenue, and military strength.

Parish (1807) is so bold in his explanation of this approach as to say questions not included are not necessary. In the preface of *A New System of Modern Geography,* Parish states the emphasis of his book is "man." "The customs and manners, the morals and religion of man, are noticed in their various gradations from the sooty African to the fair European; from the bloody Malay of Asia, or the ferocious cannibal of Anisko, to the enlightened disciple of Immanuel, who, as an angel of health, visits the sick, and feeds the hungry," states Parish (1812, ii). Before we even reach the body of the text, Parish reveals his prejudices.

Willetts is the only author who does not explain the methodology he endorses, but the format of his book is question-and-answer as well. His categories include Africa, Asia, Europe, South America, and North America. Following his descriptions of these continents, he includes a summary chart of various countries, including length, breadth,

square miles, and population. The chart is then followed by questions on the maps pertaining to that category. Out of the hundreds of questions, only nine pertain to people such as, "For what are the Arabians noted (1815, 96)?"

The catechism style of Morse's *Geography Made Easy* is slightly different. He separates a narrative list of "facts" from the questions; the questions are confined to four pages of appendices at the end of the book. "Designed to direct the youthful student to the principal matters and to facilitate the instructor," Morse (1817, 361-362) asks questions such as, "How many varieties do we reckon in the human species?" Following each question is a page number that the student can refer to for the answer. The presentation of the material as undebatable fact inhibits student participation and at the same time it conceals the subjective quality of the information presented.

*A New System of Geography* by Morse and Morse is similarly organized with a more lengthy question-and-answer section at the back of the book. The authors include one-hundred pages of questions that correspond to the organization of the book. They list information, followed by questions, primarily concerned with commerce, revenue, production, and manufacturing. There are, however, questions addressing specifically cultural aspects such as the section on "Religious Charitable Societies." The authors list seven such organizations with their purpose and then pose a question about the organization. They ask, "What is the object of the American Bible Society?" after explaining, "The American Bible Society, whose sole object is to publish and circulate the Bible, without note or comment (Morse and Morse 1822, 10)." Again, information is presented as a matter-of-fact with no attention to the complexity of culture or the subjective, political quality of knowledge.

Adams book is organized somewhat differently. The first twelve pages include a pronunciation guide followed by five pages of definitions. The next section includes sixty pages of descriptions pertaining to maps followed by twenty pages of questions on the maps. Adams then includes two-hundred pages similar to the content of the other geography schoolbooks, beginning with North America and concluding with Africa. The last ten pages of the book address ancient geography where Adams compares ancient and modern names of "principal" places. So, while Adams limits questions to map exercises, he presents information in a matter-of-fact style with little opportunity for student inquiry or recognition of subjectivity.

## Socio-economic class

Constructing a national identity is a form of social control. While national membership is quite exclusive, nationalist discourse stresses the propaganda of loyalty and unity. Edward Said, in his treatise on Eurocentrism, *Orientalism,* points out that in order to intensify its own sense of self, the nation dramatizes the distance and difference between itself and other nations (Said 1978, 55). Nationalistic discourse defines who can and cannot belong, making it impossible for all members of the collectivity to participate equally in the nation. Underlying the national identity constructed by the United States in the nineteenth century is a socio-economic class bias. This particular bias intersects all of the varying characterizations, including religion, race, and gender of people living in the United States and elsewhere around the world. The authors in failing to recognize the biases of economic privilege in the national identity they are creating help to justify colonialism, imperialism, and the discriminatory treatment of non-white cultural groups and women, both within the United States and the world at large.

In an attempt to throw off the perceived negative influence of Europe, particularly England, and to convince children that they live in a land of social mobility based on merit, the authors celebrate the superiority of the United States. Two examples from Dwight make this stance clear. In Dwight's (1802, 138) introduction to the United States, he explains:

> Though this country is divided into so many different states, yet they are, for their mutual interest, united into one great confederated republic, furnished with the happiest government, and the best constitution in the world. It is here that freedom has found an asylum, and here it will probably reside, as long as virtue shall be the ruling principle of the nation.

Dwight suggests the common bond of "mutual interest" erases differences at the same time it promotes a virtuous republic. His sense of freedom denies the existence of privilege and refuses to recognize that imperialism guarantees freedom for only a few, as his concluding sentence of the book makes clear, "If any commercial advantages were expected from a discovery of those places [Africa, Patagonia, Amazonas], it is probable that the enterprising spirit of Europeans or Americans would find means to penetrate them (Dwight 1802, 209)." It appears that "Enterprising spirit" is a euphemism for colonial ambition here, while imperialism appears to be what he advocates in that the focus is on gaining commercial advantage for Europeans and Americans in Africa and South America.

Similarly celebratory of the United States, Parish (1807, 30) proclaims the government is chosen by the people and that the United States is the only republic in the world. Parish (1807, 32) condemns slavery and recognizes socio-economic class

differences, yet his stance on social mobility is antithetical to his critique of the social and cultural context of the United States, "If a man wishes to be richer than his brethren, he must be more industrious, more economical, more enterprising." Here, Parish seems to be saying that success comes solely from the desire to work and save rather than from unearned privilege such as freedom from oppression or the opportunity to control one's choices for employment due to education or other advantages.

Patriotism and emphasis on nation building is much more covert in Morse's *Geography Made Easy*. Morse works more diligently than most at writing "objectively" and avoiding obvious value judgments, yet his prejudices are still apparent. His statement, "By the freedom of our elections, public honors and public offices are not confined to any one class of men, but are offered to merit, in whatever rank it may be found," reveals a conviction in meritocracy and a Protestant work ethic similar to that of Parish's (1807, 32) emphasis on the industrious man. So, on the surface, Morse's statement is mundane, yet privileged socio-economic status, race, and gender go unrecognized as all "men" are supposedly valued on merit alone.

Morse continues to deny privilege and the effects of imperialism and colonialism in his co-authored *A New System of Geography*. To the student of this book, socio-economic privilege is disguised as European whiteness. After reading the description of the inhabitants of the United States, where "*Whites*" are described as descendants of Europeans, "*Negroes*" are descendants of Africans, and "*Indians*" are descendants of Aborigines, students are informed (one-hundred forty-three pages later) that, "Europe is the abode of civilization, refinement, wealth, science, learning, and the arts (Morse and Morse 1822, 31, 174)." Socio-economic status here runs parallel to a nineteenth century

construction of civilization where white, middle-class, Protestants are the standard for comparison.

Socio-economic privilege is similarly disguised by Adams who constructs the same standard for comparison. Europe is where "the human mind has made the greatest progress toward improvement" and where there exists "a degree of activity superior to that of the Asiatics, Africans, or perhaps Americans (Adams 1827, 198-199)." Adams fears Americans may rely too much on the spontaneous productions of the soil, yet he says that in New England, "The distribution of wealth is more equal here than in any other civilized country (Adams 1827, 112)." Privilege is constructed as something innate to the industrious European and *his* descendants.

## Religion

All of the authors included here construct identities in such a way as to emphasize their Protestant religion. Dwight, Parish, J. Morse, S. E. Morse, and Adams are more overt about their religious biases than is Willetts. Perhaps their training for the ministry helps to explain such evident predilection, but regardless of the reason, a Christian standard is explicit in all of these early nineteenth century geography schoolbooks. Elson (1964, 45) explains, "Most of the Geographies introduce the subject of religion by dividing the religions of the world into two basic categories—true and false. And true religion is limited only to Christianity." Christianity, however, is limited to Protestantism. Such emphasis on Protestantism is just one more way the authors attempt to construct a nationalist homogeneity of the United States. The authors, through their representations, lead us to believe Protestantism is the established religion of the United States. At the same time, this bias disguises class privilege as something innate to

Protestants. Protestants are represented as the most industrious and the most intelligent, yet the authors never disclose the already established privilege that many of these people inherited.

**Protestantism**

Like the other authors, Willetts (1815, 15) proudly proclaims in his description of the United States, "There is no religion established by law in the country. Every man chooses that which pleases him." Except for Catholics who were creating their own schools because of the Protestant bias in the common schools, most nineteenth century readers of this textbook would most likely agree with Willetts' bias. Constructed as a model to emulate, Protestantism was deemed the natural, common sense choice. Without it, virtue and civic progress would fail. At no point does Dwight discuss the specifics of religion; rather he adheres to descriptions of people and cultures, and, sometimes, makes statements without further explanation. For example, the people of Sweden, after being described as hardy and persevering, are said to "have an utter aversion to popery (Catholicism) (1802, 18)." From Dwight's lack of explanation, we are led to assume the people of Sweden are more like "us" than say the Russians who are "not ashamed" of "intoxication," even among "priests and ladies (1802, 20)." Of course this aversion to alcohol parallels attitudes prevalent among Protestant sects during the nineteenth century in the United States. Parish, in the preface of his 1807 geography schoolbook, proselytizes flagrantly:

> Arguments in favor of the christian religion, which is our comfort and hope, have been suggested as opportunity occurred. That the children who study this little book, may be moral and pious, as well as

> learned, is the sincere desire and prayer of their affectionate friend the author.

Parish (1807, 213) concludes his traversal of the globe by demonizing any cultural group with a non-Christian, more specifically non-Protestantism religion:

> We have taken time cursorily to observe their customs, manners, morals, religion, and character. It must have stricken your attention that as the religious opinions and rites of any nation have been opposite to the christian revelation, you have found them immoral, selfish, or brutal, in their character

Morse, in *Geography Made Easy*, glorifies Protestantism albeit to a lesser extent. In his description of the religion of the United States, Morse emphasizes that religious liberty is a fundamental principle of the Constitution, yet goes on to list the various denominations of Christianity. While Roman Catholics are included, Morse (1817, 97-98) lists fourteen Protestant religions and concludes by saying, "There are, probably, some others, whose numbers are comparatively small." Morse's Protestant bias is even stronger in the 1822 book co-authored with his son, where they insert quips about Christian missionaries whenever possible to suggest Christian conversion parallels progress. Missionaries, according to Morse and Morse, were hard at work in Greenland, The United States (with numerous tribes of Native Americans), Asia, and Africa. In regards to Asia, the authors say that the prevailing religions are "Paganism" and "Mahometanism," but missionaries have been sent to "spread the blessings of Christianity (Morse and Morse 1822, 229)." Adams (1827, 18) describes paganism as "the worship of idols and false gods" and "the most extensive of all religions." Despite the profusion, Adams also frequently mentions the push for Christian conversion by missionary societies and repeatedly celebrates their success. People living in the

"Sandwich Islands" [Hawaii], according to Adams (1827, 285), have recently renounced idolatry with the help of missionaries from the United States. This statement is similar to that of Morse and Morse (1822, 272), in their description of "Caffraria" [South Africa], who purport, "Christian Missionaries have been employed for many years among the Hottentots and other savages of this country, with very good success," Adams (1827, 296) agrees that Christian missionaries have been laboring with great success. The missionaries' success is less fruitful in Abyssinia, however, regrets Adams (1827, 294), "Although they have long lived under a certain degree of civilization; their manners are rude, and their dispositions ferocious; nor has the christian religion much contributed to the improvement of their morals." The construction of Christianity as the desired religion works on two levels: to "other" non-Christian cultures while, at the same time, reinforcing a Western hierarchy.

**Anti-Catholic attitudes**

Willetts derides Catholicism in descriptions of Italy and Spain. A description such as, "Italy, once the garden of Europe, the parent of the arts and of civilization, and mistress of the world, is at present degenerated by superstition and popish slavery," lets us know that Willetts believes that, with the advent of Catholicism, Italy began its decline into opprobiousness. Anti-Catholic attitudes were rife in the literature of the nineteenth century, so their appearance in these geography schoolbooks is no surprise. An article in *Harper's Weekly* (October 22, 1859, 680-681) describes Rome as culturally stagnant because of Catholicism, "Perhaps, if the Papal incubus were gotten rid of, and the curse of priestly despotism removed, the Romans might once again revive to life and energy, and inscribe more characters on the old page." Willetts' treatment of Spain is parallel to

his characterization of Italy with a slight twist. Spain, a predominantly Catholic nation, is, itself, not explicitly labeled Catholic by Willetts, yet the previous characterization of Italy would allow us to make the analogy of degeneration because of Catholicism. Willetts instead derides Spain for its failure as a colonial power in the United States, "Spain possesses large tracts of country in America, which instead of enriching her, have contributed to impoverish and enervate her (1815, 65)." Willetts promotes Protestantism by condemning non-Protestant religions and cultures.

Morse's anti-Catholic stance is obvious in his descriptions of predominantly Catholic countries like Spain, Portugal, and Italy. Referring to religion in Spain, Morse (1817, 298) claims the inquisition still exists because the established religion is "Popery." Portugal too has tribunals of inquisition and Roman Catholicism "is the established religion, to the exclusion of all others (1817, 300)." Morse attempts "objectivity" or, at least, makes fewer value judgments regarding various cultures than Parish or Dwight, yet his efforts at neutral description do provide us insight into the mindset of the time. Knowledge is all too often presented as standard and neutral, and textbooks contain particular constructions of reality organized for specific purposes. Despite Morse's attempt at neutral description, we recognize the political quality of knowledge in his language.

The authors perpetuate their constructed hierarchy by openly condemning a variety of religions. Anti-Catholic attitudes abound as we have seen in previous examples. Adams (1827, 247) only mentions Catholicism in regards to Spain, where "no other religion is tolerated," while Morse and Morse (1822, 218) claim, "Spaniards are bigoted Catholics," and closely follow with their reasoning as to why Italy has fallen into

disrepair. Once "conquerors of the world, modern Italians bear no resemblance to the Romans. They are effeminate, superstitious and slavish," the Morses (1822, 223) insinuate Catholicism is to blame. Such attitudes even carry over to predominantly Catholic regions of the United States. After describing Louisiana as primarily inhabited by Roman Catholics, Morse and Morse (1822, 125) say, "Till very recently education has been much neglected." The authors emphasize education in each state in the United States to enhance the supposed highly civilized condition at home, and its importance as part of the common school campaign of the time.

**Idolaters, pagans, and heathens**

The authors characterize many people around the world as idolaters, pagans, and heathens. Rarely do they define these labels, rather they usually describe specific practices in order to "other" the cultural group being discussed. Sometimes, however, the authors simply label a particular group of people without explanations or reasons for their characterizations. Adams (1827, 18) defines paganism as, "the worship of idols and false gods." Morse (1817, 47) says, "Those people who represent the Deity under various forms or images, or who pay divine worship to the sun, fire, beasts, or any of the creatures of God, are called Pagans or Heathens." Both authors continue to explain that paganism is the most extensive of all religions. Despite their recognition of the profusion of so-called paganism, the authors "other" and exoticize religious practices markedly different from their own.

The Morses are outlandish in their descriptions of cultures they refer to as idolaters. They list at length practices of Hinduism to astound the reader. They include voluntary drowning, self-inflicted mutilation (or death) through sawing, lying on a bed of

spikes or burning coals, and suspension on a hook through flesh on the back. Concluding the list, they say, "All these things are done to obtain blessings from the gods (Morse and Morse 1822, 244)." Without the slightest explanation of these practices, student are left with little more than exoticized curiosities and even less opportunity for understanding Hinduism. Willetts (1815, 80) only mentions Hinduism to label people pagans.

Parish's description of Hinduism is equally dramatic. He says the people are pagans and endure torture, even death, for their religious beliefs: "To obtain the joys of paradise, the patient Hindoo voluntarily submits to dreadful penances, and exults with hope, while enduring unutterable misery (Parish 1812, 282)."

The authors repeatedly describe Asia as the birthplace of humans, the Garden of Eden, and the location where the creator first placed man. Despite its seat as the foundation for Christianity, the authors say Asia has the most pagans who are, of course, constructed in opposition to the seemingly desirable white, middle-class, Protestant man living in the United States.

Asia is said to be the place where "our first parents were created," yet the greatest portion of Asia's inhabitants are "Pagans" who are "luxurious, indolent, effeminate, and servile (Willetts 1815, 75)." "Here Eden bloomed, and man was created," begins Parish (1807, 168; 1812, 251) in his introduction to Asia. He is quick to point out that, "More than half the human race are here destitute of revelation, and paying religious homage to idols and false gods (Parish 1812, 252)." Morse's (1817, 316) description is similar, "It was in Asia that the all wise Creator planted the garden of Eden, in which he formed the first man and first woman, from whom the race of mankind descended." Despite such potentially ideal beginnings, at least in these authors' words, Asia became undesirable

because Christianity did not pervade. According to Morse (1817, 317), "Christianity, though planted here with wonderful rapidity by the apostles, suffered an almost total eclipse." So, again, the authors construct non-Christians in order to "other" and degrade them.

The only mention of religion from Dwight comes in a description of the Oriental Islands [Japan], when he says the Japanese are jealous but courteous to strangers, idolaters and very superstitious who "hate the Christians (1802, 108)." To exaggerate this supposed hate, Dwight's description of New Englanders would make his statement regarding the Japanese even more difficult to understand. How could anyone hate the people of New England:

> They are humane and friendly, wishing well to the human race. They are plain and simple in their manners, and on the whole, they form perhaps the most pleasing and happy society in the world (1802, 141)?

Dwight's Protestant bias is clandestine in comparison to some of the other authors where prejudice is quite vociferous.

Parish's description of religion in Japan is blatantly derogatory. He says that despite Christianity's foundation in Asia the Japanese are gross idolaters. "To fix a lasting abhorrence of Christianity in every heart . . . they trample on the cross, or an image of the virgin Mary and her son," says Parish (1812, 303). Like Dwight, Parish exaggerates a supposed hatred toward Christians to enhance the constructed dichotomy between West and East, Christian and non-Christian, us and them. Morse (1817, 337) states simply and with the authority then granted a schoolbook author, "The religion of the Japanese is gross heathenism and idolatry."

Another cultural group "othered" and exoticized by these nineteenth century geography schoolbook authors through religion are Hawaiians. Morse and Morse (1822, 260) go into little detail, saying the people here worshipped idols and sacrificed humans, but renounced such practices in 1819. Adams (1827, 285) similarly states that these "mild , affectionate, ingenious" people recently renounced idolatry with the help of missionaries from the United States. Parish (1812, 320), on the other hand, goes into some detail in his description of religious practices in Hawaii. "These islanders are pagans, and have numerous temples, in which are idols; to these they offer sacrifices of hogs, vegetables, and men." He goes on to draw similarities between Judaism and the religion practiced by Hawaiians. Parish never mentions missionaries or the renouncing of idols, but he does say when the inhabitants of Hawaii "were discovered, they supposed themselves the only people in the world (1812, 321)." With this sentence as his conclusion, Parish amused his nineteenth century reader by constructing Hawaiians as ridiculous, absurd, and dumb. How could such uncivilized beings believe they alone inhabit the world?

**Islam**

When explaining how the Orient became known in the West, Said (1978, 59) explains how the threat of Islam was controlled, "If the mind must suddenly deal with what it takes to be a radically new form of life—the response on the whole is conservative and defensive. Islam is judged to be a fraudulent new version of some previous experience, in this case Christianity." Fear of the unknown is overcome by constructing Muhammad as an imposter, Islam as an exotic and dangerous repetition of

Christianity, and projecting the bigotry of Christianity onto a faith unknown to the authors.

Islam is repeatedly presented in these nineteenth century geography schoolbooks as not only bizarre but unnatural. Willetts (1815, 82) explains that, "Mahometanism" is the religion of "Arabia," and goes on to say, "The Arabians are noted for their robberies, and fully justify the prophecy, 'that their hands should be against every man, and every man's against them.'" He avoids defining what he refers to as "Mahometanism," but exoticizes and degrades the people who practice these religions.

Morse and Morse (1822, 226) declare:

> The Turks are Mahometans. They believe that Mahomet was a greater prophet than Jesus Christ, and that the Koran is the word of God. The Turks are a very superstitious people, and place great confidence in omens and dreams. They are bigoted in their attachment to their own faith, and treat all other denominations as dogs.

Mussulman instead of Mahometan is the label used when Morse and Morse describe the manners and customs of people living in Turkey. Adams (1827, 18) also uses the offensive label Mahometans in describing Muslims:

> Mahometanism is a system of religion devised by Mahomet, sometimes called the false prophet, and is contained in a book called the Koran or Alcoran. The followers of this religion are called Musselmen or Mahometans.

This characterization reveals the authors' lack of understanding of Islam on a number of levels at the same time it reveals a lack of critical self-awareness. By referring to the people who practice Islam as Mahometans, these geography schoolbook authors impose a faulty label. Nineteenth century (mis)understandings of Muslim cultures, led to a

defective analogy between Christ and Christians and "Mahomet" and "Mahometans" (Daniel 1960, 33). The arrogance is obvious when outsiders label people with their faiths instead of using the already self-identified label the people have given themselves.

To Muslims, Muhammad is believed to be a greater prophet than Jesus Christ and the Koran, rather than the Bible, is thought to contain the last revelations of God. For staunch Protestants, Islamic faith threatened their sense of self, so nineteenth century geography book authors worked diligently to "other" any practicing Muslim. Constructed as unnatural, Islam and its followers were deemed by these authors as freakish deviants. The authors were projecting their own fears and prejudices on to Muslim cultures. To not follow the Christian faith was to question or doubt it. And, for those constructing a national identity based on Protestantism, this threat was perhaps all too real. Because of their own religious bigotry, the authors failed to see the flaws in their own constructions.

Parish (1812, 265) demonizes Islam when he describes "Mahometanism" as the prevailing religion of Palestine, "Such an evil it is to lose a good government and the religion of the bible." Egypt is also vilified because of the prominence of Islam, "The Koran has covered the country with darkness. Egypt is far inferior to itself in former times (Parish 1812, 339)." According to Parish, a variety of Muslim cultures are falling into disrepair because of their religious practices, yet he fails to really provide any information to back his claims and makes gross generalizations and offensive stereotypes. Parish (1812, 338) claims that "There is a general similarity of character in all Mahometan countries. The Koran gives a peculiar complexion to the human mind, wherever its authority extends." In contrast, he insists that, "The christian Copts are the

best characters in the country." Thus Parish led the nineteenth century reader to believe Muslims were inherently deficient in matters of the mind and character.

Morse (1817, 47), in *Geography Made Easy*, reinforces what Said describes as the original versus the repetitious concept of Islam:

> The Mahometans derive their name and doctrine from *Mahomet*, a native of Arabia, who flourished from the year 600 to 622, after Christ. The book which contains their religion is called the *Alcoran*, and is the same to a Mahometan as the *Bible* is to a Christian (emphasis original).

By emphasizing that Muhammad came after Christ, Morse insinuates that Islam is a defective version of Christianity, and that Muslims are somehow deficient by either their inability or refusal to follow Christianity. Morse (1817, 47) does include one sentence that begins to touch on the complexity of Islam, yet fails to provide further context, "The Mahometans, as well as the Christians, are divided into a great variety of sects, under different names." Although the nineteenth century reader was scarcely informed regarding Islam, Morse, at least, acknowledged variations within Islam. While religion is one modus operandi used to "other," gender, which intersects with religion and class, is another.

## Women

As Cynthia Enloe (1989, 61) reminds us, national narratives depend on constructions of women. Enloe says, "Nationalism, more than any other ideologies, has a vision that includes women, for no nation can survive without culture being transmitted and children being born and nurtured." In these nineteenth century geography schoolbooks, the nation is constructed in opposition to the "other" from which a sharp

contrast materializes between "us" and "them," but, more specifically, between our women and theirs (Mayer 1999, 10).

In contrast to the usual construction of women in nation building, Willetts renders women completely invisible. Nowhere in his schoolbook does he mention women, although he does attach gender to nation by using the gendered pronoun her when he refers to Spain and ascribes Italy as "mistress of the world." The analogy constructed by Willetts implies that these feminized nations need protection, particularly by men. The state of these two nations, according to Willetts divulges that because men failed to protect their feminized spaces, the countries have become impoverished and denigrated. So, while Willetts renders "real" women invisible, he does imply gender stereotypes.

**Appearance and character**

The idea that the virtue of a nation relies on the character, behavior, and treatment of women is flagrantly overt in these early nineteenth century geography schoolbooks; examples abound. Women are repeatedly characterized in these books in order to remind us what women are and are not. Western women, particularly from the United States and England, are constructed in a flattering manner, while women whose cultural practices differ are exoticized and "othered." New England "women are educated to house wifery, excellent companions and house-keepers; spending their leisure time in reading books of useful information, and rendering themselves not only useful, but amiable and pleasing," characterizes Dwight (1802, 141). How lucky are these women to have the leisure time to read, yet manage to make themselves useful. Additional women constructed in a flattering manner by Dwight (1802, 30) include English women, "The women are handsome and graceful in their appearance, beyond those of almost any country." New

England women are described as "well formed, comely, delicate, and often beautiful (Dwight 1802, 142)." Women living in the United States are constructed as the standard by which all other women are compared, "The women possess in the highest degree the domestic virtues. Good mothers and good wives, their husband and their children engage their whole attention (Parish 1807, 28; 1812, 41)." Such ingratiating characterizations construct women living in the United States and especially those of English descent as lucky in comparison to women living elsewhere or to those of a different ethnic or racial heritage; at the same time the socio-economic class status of these women is rendered invisible.

Morse's descriptions all relate to the general character of women in comparison to the desirability of an idealized type. Physical descriptions are limited to women of South Carolina, Denmark, and Chios [Greece], who are all characterized as pleasing in appearance. The women of South Carolina "have an engaging softness and delicacy in their appearance and manners (Morse 1817, 206)." In Denmark, "The women are handsome and courteous (Morse 1817, 253)." Morse (1817, 313) is most celebratory in his description of women from Chios, "The women of this, and almost all the other Greek islands, have, in all ages, been celebrated for their beauty, and their persons have been the most perfect models of symmetry to painters and statuaries." However, if Morse is using Greek art to establish the supposed attractiveness of Greek women, he fails to recognize that until the Hellenistic period, Greek art, particularly statuary, is highly idealized and not based on actual human models.

Further physical descriptions of women reinforce the binary dichotomy constructed between "our" women and "their" women. The women of Turkey, Dwight

(1802, 88) says, wear veils when they go abroad, otherwise they dress much like men. While such a description is superficial, it enhances the difference being constructed, and we need to remind ourselves that this difference is constructed as a deficiency. It is interesting to note Morse's bias towards women who are granted characteristics similar to white, middle-class, Protestant women living in the United States. When differences are constructed in a more pronounced manner, Morse's flattery ends. His claims become blanket statements of unquestionable fact, allowing little understanding of customs markedly different than those experienced by the students of these books. In a discussion about the aboriginal inhabitants of America, Morse (1817, 55) says, "The women wear no more covering than the most relaxed modesty seems absolutely to require." Adams (1827, 284), while discussing Pelew [Peleliu] Island, describes apparel but still emphasizes nudity, "Men go entirely naked, while the women only wear two little aprons, or rather fringes, made of the husk of a cocoa-nut." The standard for comparison is the ever-prudent, lady-like, middle-class, Protestant, white woman residing within the United States (likely New England).

Russian women are said by Dwight (1802, 20) to resemble English women, but he adds that "only the ladies injure theirs [their complexions] by adding artificial red, of which they are very fond." Dwight's description implies Russian women present themselves in a gaudy, garish manner further implying questionable morals. Thus we are not surprised when he follows with a supposed Russian propensity for intoxication where even the "ladies are not ashamed of it on holidays (Dwight 1802, 20)." Here we see the connection between women's character and nation building. Because Russian women,

according to Dwight, indulge generously in make-up and, sometimes, drink, we are supposed to question the virtue of Russia.

Some women living elsewhere are granted seemingly desirous physical characteristics, such as women from Marquesas who "are nearly as fair as Europeans (Adams 1827, 285; Parish 1812, 321)," or even Egypt, where Parish (1812, 338) says, "Their women have pleasant countenances, black eyes, and elegant forms." Yet, in many of these seemingly complimentary descriptions, Parish provides exceptions in order to caution the reader about possible flaws in the character of these women. Like the women of Marquesas, who despite their good looks, continue to go without clothing. In Parish's 1807 book, he says Egyptian women veil their faces, but "when seen are sufficiently ugly to prevent any improper desires (203)." His emphasis on physical attributes is not only superficial and insulting, it reinforces ideas about women's worth and constructs them as passive objects for one's viewing rather than active subjects participating in cultural developments and in local and global economies.

**Exoticized customs**

Furthermore, Dwight, the Morses, Parish, and Adams denigrate numerous cultural practices by either simply mentioning particular practices without any explanation or by exoticizing certain practices. For example, women of Circassia are commonly described as physically attractive, or in Dwight's (1802, 92) words, are the "handsomest in the world," yet authors who include this information never fail to tell us that Circassian daughters are sold to men in Turkey. So, despite their handsome good looks, their cultural practices are presented as odd and condemned rather than explained. The authors

attempt to astound their readers with bizarre customs in order to exoticize cultures constructed in opposition to the culture of the United States.

Another construction of an outlandish difference is polygamy. Morse mentions polygamy in reference to Turkey and China. Polygamy is mentioned six times by Parish, yet he fails to explain the practice or the potential benefits of numerous wives for men or women. He claims polygamy is practiced by the aboriginal inhabitants of Canada and people in Turkey, Tibet, India, Siampa [Vietnam], and Whydah [Central and Southern Africa]. Constructed as a deficiency, this difference (polygamy) is a popular topic among these authors.

Dwight (1802, 88) intensifies the disparity by briefly mentioning marriage arrangements in Turkey, "Their religion allows them only four wives; but as many concubines as they please. The women negotiate the match, the men troubling themselves very little about it." This description is filled with innuendos about religion and the roles of men and women. People of Turkey are "othered" in this instance because of their religion and cultural and social practices. The men are constructed as lazy because they "trouble themselves little," or, perhaps, the men of Turkey viewed this practice as women's work and thus of little importance. Here Dwight touches on the power of women in this society without really addressing it. By avoiding a fuller discussion or even a recognition of women's input in such an important social and cultural aspect of life in Turkey, Dwight manages to degrade the practice and the people.

Morse's discussion of marriage customs in Turkey, while still lacking critical explanation, provides us with slightly more information regarding women's roles:

> Polygamy is a universal practice among them. Either party may dissolve the marriage contract at pleasure. The man seldom sees his bride till after the ceremony, the business being negotiated by female friends (Morse 1817, 311).

Without further explanation, Turkish marriage customs seem bizarre and exotic, yet reading these three sentences gives us the sense that women in Turkey may have more control over their own destiny than women living in the United States. In his later book, co-authored with his son, Morse constructs women in Turkey as victims. Morse and Morse (1822, 226) declare, "Every Mussulman [*sic*] is allowed to have four wives and as many concubines as he pleases. The concubines are usually slaves, purchased in the market." Adams approach to women in Turkey is slightly different. After stating polygamy is practiced, he briefly mentions living accommodations, "Apartments for women are separate, and never entered by any male except the master of the family (Adams 1827, 255)." He then claims their morals "are loose in the extreme," further emphasizing that women's character continues to be related to their cultural customs.

Morse and Morse (1822, 252) tell us polygamy is practiced in China, but that "the women are in the most abject degradation." Adams (1827, 276) also says polygamy is permitted in China and that women are held in the greatest state of subjection. Both books include the claim that parents who cannot support their female children cast them into the river. Following their example of child abuse, Morse and Morse describe the practice of foot binding:

> A practice prevails of binding the feet of female children in tight bandages till they cease to grow. This is done that they may have handsome feet, for a small foot is deemed a great beauty. The foot of a

> full sized Chinese woman is not more than six inches long (1822, 252).

Adams too mentions foot binding but in less detail. The women of China are constructed here as victims of their culture. The authors fail to connect socio-economic conditions to these practices in order to make these women bizarre. Such descriptions insinuate just how lucky women are who live in the United States, at the same time they avoid addressing the influence of socio-economics. While many women in China, and elsewhere, were in fact terribly oppressed, the authors purposely chose to include these specific examples of women's oppression in order to bolster the image of women living in the United States. This selective process concealed the oppression of women in the United States considering an image of poor, white, oppressed, laboring women would have shattered the authors' constructed ideal national identity.

Exoticizing people and cultural practices is one more way these authors "other" non-Western women and men. Incest, abuse, mutilation, and murder are mentioned to reinforce differences between "us" and "them." Women in India are repeatedly constructed as victims of their culture in order to exaggerate difference. Despite his explanation that the custom is in decline, Parish's (1807, 181; 1812, 280) statement, "The horrid custom of giving the living widow to the flames with the dead husband, is going out of repute," is intended to accentuate the constructed dichotomy between "us" and "them." Adams (1827, 269) also claims this practice is in decline, but says, "No female is permitted to leave the country, lest it should injure the population." The nineteenth century student would be even more astonished to read, "Desertions or cowardice in a soldier is punished by the execution of his wife, children, and parents. An innocent wife

or daughter may be seized and sold into slavery to discharge a debt of her husband (Adams 1827, 271)." Adams strongly emphasizes gender by saying a wife or daughter may be sold in order to reinforce the construction of the lucky women living in the United States. Morse and Morse (1822, 244) describe the same practice in India, "It is a very common custom for women to burn themselves to death, on the funeral pile of their husbands." They continue to "other" women in India by saying, "Infants are frequently thrown into the Ganges, and are there devoured by crocodiles (Morse and Morse 1822, 244)."

Horrific examples of abuse and murder surface again and again as these authors perpetuate the supposed luck of women living in the United States in contrast to women living elsewhere. Parish (1812, 27, 30) claims incest is common among the aboriginal inhabitants of Canada, and when "an infant cries, the mother plunges it in the sea, whether it be summer or winter, to make it quiet." In various parts of Africa, we are told by Parish (1812, 330, 346) that women are treated as slaves. Moreover, Parish (1812, 152) claims that "husbands and fathers might kill their wives and children" in Chile. Such "savage" cruelty really culminates for Parish (1812, 143) with women in New Granada [Ecuador, Colombia, Panama], "Mothers consider it an act of tenderness to destroy their female children, to save them from the miseries endured by women in a savage state." Morse and Morse also construct women as the victims of uncivilized, pagan cultures. Prior to the arrival of missionaries in "barbarous" Greenland, "They frequently buried their old women alive, to get rid of the trouble and expense of maintaining them. Children have been known to bury their own parents in this way (Morse and Morse 1822, 37)." These last two statements strongly emphasize and

foreshadow the strict dichotomy constructed between "civilized" and "savage" cultures in geography schoolbooks throughout the nineteenth century. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of women's character and behavior in constructing a virtuous nation. Such an example surfaces in Parish's (1807, 157; 1812, 236) blatant aversion toward Catholicism when he explains Roman Catholicism in Italy relaxes morality and renders men "indifferent to female chastity."

**Women's work**

The textbook authors give some examples of women's work. Women's work is acknowledged, but explanations are limited, further strengthening the dichotomy constructed between women living in the United States and women living elsewhere. This "mentioning" of women's work does more to sustain the myth of the virtuous republic that is the United States.

The native women of Canada are likened to women of ancient Sparta who Parish (1807, 49; 1812, 29) claims govern their tribes. Women in Quebec have similar power according to Parish (1812, 32):

> Many of the women can read and write; in this they are superior to men, very few of whom can read. The women, of course, have great influence in all domestic affairs. The husband seldom makes a bargain, or undertakes anything of importance without consulting his wife: but all are very ignorant and superstitious.

Morse similarly constructs women in Quebec, but religious differences restrain his compliments. "The French women in lower Canada [Quebec] can generally read and write, and are thus superior to the men; but both are sunk in ignorance and superstition, and blindly devoted to their priests (Morse 1817, 81)." So, despite women's influence,

education, and work, they continue to be constructed as not just different from women living in the United States, but deficient.

Dwight's description of women's work in West Greenland, Lapland, and Sweden does more to bolster the "lucky" state of women living in the United States than to recognize women's contributions to local and global economies. In West Greenland, "The men hunt and fish, and leave their prey to be dressed by the women, who do all their work both as mechanics and house-wives (Dwight 1802, 14)." Laplander "women make nets for fishing and cure their fish after the men bring them to land (Dwight 1802, 16)." And in Sweden women "do all the common drudgery of life and are in the place of the men in other countries (Dwight 1802, 18)."

Adams constructs Native American women as industrious, but, again, this characterization exaggerates the myth of the lucky housewife enjoying her leisure time in the United States. Creek Indian women in Georgia "spin and weave, and their children are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic (Adams 1827, 151)." Native American women in Michigan, Adams tells us, also spin and make cloth. While these women are characterized as productive, we are given little information to understand the complexity of real women's lives.

Women living in Sweden are also described by Parish (1812, 179) as hard-working but also modest and moral, "Women row on the water, thresh grain, hold the plough, and perform other labours on the farm." More unusual, however, is his treatment of women in New Caledonia, "The women perform the drudgeries of the family. They are pure and chaste in their morals, and modest in their dress and deportment (1812, 317)." This is unusual because non-Western women are seldom granted such seemingly

desirable characteristics. More often, we see constructions like Parish's description of people in Siam [Thailand], "The people are of a dark hue; the men are indolent, and the women perform the most laborious occupations; a proof that civilization has made little progress (1812, 288)." Adams (1827, 273) also says, "The men are extremely indolent, and leave the most laborious occupations to the women," but Parish's analogy suggests that women's work in so-called civilized societies is different. Furthermore, the comment is racist because Parish is claiming Thailand's non-civilized status is based on some inherent inferiority insinuated to be related to skin color. This analogy between so-called "civilization" and race is common in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks and becomes more pronounced as time continues.

## Race

Gendered stereotypes are commonplace in early nineteenth century geography schoolbooks; not unexpectedly these sexist attitudes are also infused with racist sentiment. Racist characterizations help to bolster the national image being constructed by these authors. In their attempts to construct a virtuous, homogeneous nation, the authors accentuate the differences between the idealized type living in the United States and those living elsewhere. Elson (1964, 65) explains, "The doctrine of race as a method of classifying men was singularly rigid: it assumed that biologically inherited traits—physical, mental, and moral—are immutable. Furthermore races could be classified according to the desirability of their traits." Beyond racial classifications, these authors use racial hierarchies to distinguish between "civilized" and "savage" societies without questioning supposedly natural divisions (Elson 1964, 66). While such categories often depend on physical descriptions, nineteenth century geography schoolbook authors also

mention "customs" and "manners" to distinguish between various cultural groups and accentuate differences.

**Effects of climate**

Parish's schoolbook reflects the common nineteenth century explanation that these variations in physiognomy are the result of differences in climate. His (1812, 13-14) summary of the effects of climate on human character is worth repeating:

> In the torrid zone, the excessive heat produces such debility of mind, as renders the inhabitants incapable of any sublime effort. No instance is known of their attaining eminence in the higher branches of science and literature. Accordingly, Providence has planted many delicious fruits, which spontaneously furnish these indolent nations with pleasant and wholesome food. The temperate zone seems to be the most delightful in the world. Here all the most famous places on the earth, rich and populous countries, renowned for their achievements and knowledge, their refinement and virtue. In this favourite situation, the religion of man is most pure, his attainments most splendid, his character most elevated. The few inhabitants of the northern frigid zone fly in winter to subterraneous dwellings, to shelter themselves from the terrible cold; they live by fishing and hunting; they endure extreme wretchedness from cold and hunger; they are spiritless, inactive savages.

Parish (1812, 14) concludes his explanation on the variety of physical characteristics by contradicting himself, "A thousand arguments prove there is but one species of men." Yes, there is but one species of *human* even though these early nineteenth century geography schoolbook authors insist on constructing hierarchies to perpetuate a mythical superiority based on race.

Specific examples of the effects of climate on human behavior include: Dwight's (1802, 127) claim that people in the Congo are lazy because of the climate; Willetts' (1815, 31) claim that the heat of Georgia renders the inhabitants indolent with an aversion to labor; or Parish's (1812, 179) description of people in Lapland who because of the cold are "diminutive" with "large heads," and also ignorant and superstitious. The only mention of the effects of climate on human behavior by Morse and Morse concerns the southern United States. According to the authors, most slaves reside in the South because "the climate is so hot that white men frequently cannot labour with safety (Morse and Morse 1822, 98)." Morse (1817, 340), in his earlier book, assigns less overtly demeaning characterizations than the other authors as when he addresses the heat of Africa, "The natives of these scorching regions would as soon expect that marble should melt and flow in liquid streams, as that water should be congealed by cold and cease to flow." While his description certainly makes some climates of Africa unappealing, he does not devalue human action or inaction in this example. Adams (1827, 286) description of Africa is flagrantly racist, "The dark hue and savage disposition of the inhabitants, and the peculiar ferocity of its numerous beasts of prey, seem in unison with the intense heat, and the wild horror of the deserts." Generally blaming climate for supposed civility or savagery came easy for these authors. By assigning physical descriptions to people, they continue to treat varying cultures divisively in order to enhance their ethnocentric view of the world.

**Physiognomy**

The textbook authors typically divide the globe into four parts: America, Asia, Africa, and Europe. Occupants inhabiting these spaces are further categorized, using a

variety of attributes, particularly physiognomy. These same divisions are similarly described by J. Morse, S. E. Morse, Adams, and Willetts. Morse (1817, 43) refers to these divisions as "political": "*Europe* is the smallest, but the most improved and civilized; *Africa* the most barbarous, and the least known; *Asia* the wealthiest, and the most anciently inhabited; *America* the largest, the grandest, the least populous and wealthy, the last explored and inhabited [emphasis original]." Morse (1817, 44-45) further subdivides humans into six varieties claiming they are so strongly marked that there is little indication of "mixture." Morse's categories of humans, which he numbers one through six, accordingly, include: inhabitants around the polar regions, most of Asia, southern Asia, Africa, aboriginal America, and Europe. He describes these categories in a matter-of-fact way with little explanation other than these people resemble one another physically.

Descriptions of physical characteristics present an interesting dilemma here. When people are *not* described physically, they are assumed to be like "us." Authors reserve physical descriptions for people constructed as different. By limiting their physical descriptions to certain cultural groups, the authors perpetuate the barrier they have constructed between "us" and "them." The only visual image from these early geography schoolbooks provides an example of this constructed dichotomy (See Figure 5.1). Adams (1827, n.p.) presents students with a representation of men and women from cultures typically depicted in opposition to people living in the United States. The most obvious superficial distinction here is clothing. Immediately recognized as different, the couples shown here wear outfits, most likely, unfamiliar to students. Displayed as passive objects for our viewing, these men and women are lined up for inspection, and


Figure 5.1. Egyptians, Turks, Chinese, Hottentots

placed against an empty background, so we can only imagine how different their homes, communities, and cultures are. Nebulously placed within the schoolbook, the visual immediately follows questions on the map and precedes Adams' discussion of the United States. Turkey, the first of these cultures addressed by Adams, is one hundred fifty pages later. This image is really a precursor to the later visuals distinguishing race, and the dichotomy constructed between civilized and savage modes of living.

People described by these authors typically live in Africa, Asia, and Australia, not the United States or Europe. People of color living in the United States or Europe are often described, however. For example, Morse and Morse (1822, 31) say the "Indians" who occupy America have a "copper complexion." They do not describe the complexion of "Whites" or "Negroes," and, therefore, assume the reader already understands the labels. Throughout the book, Morse and Morse provide attributes in a section titled "Character." When they assign "character" to European countries, they use descriptions such as robust, active, brave, and industrious, however, when discussing the "character" of non-Western cultures, they describe physical attributes rather than personality traits. In his earlier book, Morse (1817, 249) emphasizes the dichotomy by setting up Europe as the standard by which the rest of the world is compared, "Though Europe is the least extensive quarter of the globe, yet it may be considered as the principal in everything relating to man in society."

Parish explicitly uses a dichotomy similar to that of the Morses. Following his pages covering the United States and Europe, Parish (1812, 245) prefaces the section on Asia (followed by Africa and Australia):

> The countries we have examined, though different in some respects, have distinct marks of resemblance in their religion and laws, their arts and studies. With most of them Americans feel powerful sympathy from family descent, the sameness of their religion, commercial intercourse, the adoption of their manners, fashions, and opinions, or daily information of their circumstances and dispositions towards us; but we now pass to a people with whom we have little intercourse, a people opposite to us in religion, manners, and habits.

Thus we know from Parish's explanation that we should consider these people exotic or, at least, unfamiliar.

Dwight, Parish, J. Morse, S. E. Morse, and Adams include physical descriptions of people, some rather innocuous, some blatantly offensive. Willetts, on the other hand, includes no physical descriptions whatsoever. Examples of less offensive descriptions include Dwight's (1802, 94) characterization of the Chinese as small in stature with broad faces, small black eyes, short noses whose complexions are fair in the north and tawny in the south. While this characterization perpetuates difference and constructs it as a deficiency, it is less outrageous than Dwight's (1802, 130) characterization of people in "Caffraria" [South Africa], "They have little besides the shapes and features of men to designate that they belong to the human species." Although Dwight tells us that these people are not quite as savage as the "Hottentots," who live just south of "Caffraria," east of what is now Cape Good Hope, he describes them as the most "abject" of the human race. Adams (1827, 296) says, "Caffers" are tall and well made, but are "much inferior to the neighboring African tribes." Parish (1812, 330) places Africa in the lowest of the four divisions of the planet, emphasizing that, "Instead of delight, Africa excites ideas of

terror or disgust. No reader will wish to make Africa his home." As students committed this information to memory, they would easily believe in the hierarchies constructed here if this was the only information they had on these cultures.

Another cultural group deemed abject and barely human is Australians or, as these authors refer to them, people in New Holland. Parish (1807, 192) claims the natives here are the lowest state of human society, just "one degree above the Ourang Outang [*sic*] of Borneo." The primate analogy continues in Parish's (1812, 314) later book where he says, "Their persons are of low stature, and ill made, with long hair, thick lips, flat noses, and wide mouths. In some instances there is a shocking resemblance of the monkey." Morse (1817, 357) abases Australian natives claiming, "They are the most miserable people in the world. They are long visaged, and of a very unpleasant aspect, having not one graceful feature in their faces." In *A New System of Geography* (1822, 259), Morse and Morse tell us native Australians are dirty and ugly and the most degraded of the human species. Adams (1827, 283) goes into some detail in order to provide a physical description of Australian native: partly black, partly copper hue, long hair, thick eyebrows and lips, flat noses, sunken eyes, wide mouths, low stature, and ill made. What would students memorizing such derogatory fragments of information likely come away with? Unless they knew someone personally from these regions or with this ancestry, or they had information to counteract these descriptions, they would most likely incorporate the constructed hierarchies into their conceptual frameworks. The difference constructed between "us" and "them" in these examples is powerful and obscene. Such descriptions vindicate imperialism, colonialism, and the outrageous treatment of non-white cultural groups living in the United States.

**Native Americans**

Nineteenth century geography schoolbook authors treat Native Americans paradoxically. Because they are the original inhabitants of the United States, they are granted seemingly more desirous characteristics than other non-white groups living in the United States. At the same time, Native Americans were perceived as a threat to the constructed national identity because of the vast differences between the cultures, and more so because of white interest in Indian land. As a means to differentiate and dominate, these authors constructed Native Americans as "noble savages." The authors are quick to explain that Native Americans were savages upon the "discovery" of America, but civilization, primarily through the work of missionaries, is rapidly spreading. We are repeatedly told, however, that American Indians are quickly disappearing from the advance of civilization or, sometimes, from their own warfare.

Some of the authors explain the decreasing Native American population as a direct result of the advancing white population. Native Americans, according to Dwight (1802, 187), "gradually drop away, and after a few years, the country is left entirely to the white people." Morse and Morse (1822, 35) furnish more information about the decline of the Native American population, "Indians are fast melting away" because whites increased in number and advanced "into the interior, either purchasing the land of the Indians or driving them off by force." While the Morses' statement is more descriptive than Dwight's, they both fail to uncover the unjust treatment of American Indians. Without a thorough discussion, the authors insinuate such injurious actions were reasonable.

At the time of "discovery," Adams (1827, 99) purports, "America was one vast and almost entire wilderness, but sparingly inhabited by a people mostly rude and savage." The supposed savageness is emphasized by Morse (1817, 74), "Their modes of hunting and warfare, their cruelty to their prisoners, the singularities of scalping, and other *general* characteristics, have been frequently described, and are generally known (emphasis original)." The destruction of American Indians is thus justified through their construction as cruel savages. Parish treats the American Indian more sympathetically. Although they were once savages, Parish (1812, 42) describes them as "harmless objects of compassion" after exposure to missionaries and learning to cultivate their lands. "Beginning to experience the comforts of civilization and religion, they in a great degree forsake the vices of paganism," Parish explains in order to vindicate the cruel treatment of American Indians. For the sake of "civilization," Native Americans were forcibly Americanized and deculturalized. Because the civilizing efforts attempted to assimilate American Indians into the dominant culture, the comfort Parish suggests was perhaps experienced by whites rather than Native Americans. The authors, generally, justify the cruel treatment of American Indians through their descriptions in order to enhance an ideally constructed, homogeneous national identity.

Success in civilizing Native Americans is a popular topic for these authors. The following descriptions are quoted for their content and similar language. Regarding Rhode Island, Parish (1807, 53; 1812, 70) states, "Lately about 500 Indians resided in this state, in Charlestown. They are peaceable, and speak the English language." Morse (1817, 139), in almost word-for-word language, writes, "There are about 500 Indians in this state [Rhode Island]; the greater part of whom reside at Charlestown. They are

peaceable, and well disposed towards government, and speak the English language." The emphasis on speaking English accentuates acculturation (or, perhaps, more fittingly, deculturalization) and the homogenization of cultures.

The Cherokee and Chickasaw nations in Tennessee are also common subjects for these authors, and again the emphasis is on the process of civilizing. Morse (1817, 199) discusses a flourishing missionary school supported by the government and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions when he tells us, "This nation [Cherokee] is already farther advanced in the arts and manners of civilized life, than most other Indian tribes in the United States." Willetts (1815, 30) suggests that the Chickasaws are more civilized than some other American Indians by including their "boast of never having shed the blood of a white man." Parish's (1807, 91; 1812, 122) characterization is similar to Willetts', "The Chickasaws boast, that they never shed the blood of a white man. They have a frank, open appearance, not common among savages." Parish (1807, 91; 1812, 122) further perpetuates the myth of the "noble savage" by saying, "Missionaries have lately been sent to these benighted pagans, and kindly received."

Creek Indians in Georgia, according to these authors, are also making considerable progress toward civilization (Adams 1827, 151). Parish (1812, 128) claims, "They well understand their own interests, are jealous of their rights, and tenacious of their lands." Willetts (1815, 31) innocuously states, "The Creek indians inhabit the middle part of the state [Georgia], and are the most numerous tribe in the United States." Reminiscent of Willetts, Morse (1817, 212) repeats that Creek Indians inhabit the middle part of the state and, until the war in 1814, were "the most numerous tribe of Indians of any within the limits of the United States." Along the lines of Parish, Morse (1817, 212)

characterizes the Creek as "a hardy, sagacious, polite people, extremely jealous of their rights." By such characterizations, nineteenth century geography schoolbook authors constructed a hierarchy of Native Americans by claiming that some are more civilized than others. The authors' descriptions of Native Americans reinforce the myth of the "noble savage" at the same time they justify the cruel treatment and murder of American Indians.

**Slavery**

"Slavery as an institution is condemned as a moral wrong in a majority of books, although there are some which mention it without value judgment," Elson (1964, 88) tells us. Morse exemplifies such mentioning by quantifying slavery in the United States. He (1817, 127) observes that, "There are no slaves in Massachusetts," and then lists the number of slaves in Maryland, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Morse's desire for "objectivity" is evident here where his mention of slavery is so slight and without condemnation, and he is the exception to the pronounced moral outrage by these early authors.

Parish firmly situates his stance on slavery in morality. While discussing the inhabitants of the United States, Parish explains how the Constitution is supposed to forbid the importation of slaves after 1808. He goes on to say, "Should they have virtue to do this, it will immortalize their names, and weeping humanity will bless their memories (Parish 1807, 30)." Such generosity (or virtue according to Parish) for prohibiting the enslavement of people will be rewarded with fame and recognition seems an unusual lesson for students. Instead of emphasizing that *all* people should be treated fairly and humanely, Parish focuses on the potential rewards for doing so. Parish fails to

unpack the hideousness of slavery in this example, but gets closer with his lesson on North Carolina. While discussing the "madness" of slavery, Parish (1807, 94) explains, "The testimony of a black is not received against a white-man; the master, who murders his slave, is punished only by a fine." If Parish is truly outraged by the institution of slavery, this last example is more explicit in revealing the hypocrisy that is the "virtuous" and "free" United States. Remember, Parish celebrates the republic that is the United States and proclaims that meritocracy encourages industriousness. Such a construction, however, only works for "free," white, middle-class men.

At the same time these authors condemn slavery as morally wrong, they subversively justify it based on the so-called degraded condition of Africans, and they often blame the victims themselves. For example, Willetts (1815, 88) blames Africa for the slave trade, and praises Christianity for ending the practice, "Guinea is divided into the grain, the ivory, and the gold coast, and supplies Europeans with slaves; a trade, which, for the honour of Christianity, has been abolished." Notice here that Europeans and not Americans are supplied with slaves.

Morse and Morse (1822, 31) explain how blacks in the United States are "descendants of Africans who were forced from their native country, and sold as slaves to American planters." The tone of their seemingly innocuous explanation changes when they describe slavery in specific states. Although they insinuate that slavery renders slave owners idle, Morse and Morse (1822, 98) reinforce racism when they say, "the climate is so hot that white men frequently cannot labour with safety." In their discussion of West Africa, Morse and Morse (1822, 270), like Willetts, blame Europe for the slave

trade, "For three centuries the ships of European nations carried off annually thousands of negros, and sold them to American planters. This abominable traffic is now abolished."

The authors also construct differences between southern and northern slavery in the United States by drawing attention to the deleterious effects of slavery on slave owners. Dwight (1802, 174) describes slave holders as haughty and imperious and claims, "The holders of slaves have the same character in all countries." Parish's (1807, 27; 1812, 40) position differs:

> The slavery of the negroes produces one of the most odious traits in the American character. Almost a million slaves, mostly in the south, produce idleness, luxury, tyranny, and inhumanity. In the northern and eastern states there are but very few, that are called slaves, and this is rather nominal than a real slavery. For the most part the slaves and their masters, in New-England, labour in the same field, sleep under the same roof, eat at the same table, attend public worship in the same congregation, and their children are instructed in the same schools. In the south, slavery is a more bitter cup. The black performs all the drudgeries, which ignominious submission can execute, or unfeeling despotism command.

Parish makes sure that his reader understands differences between slavery in the North and the South. Because of widespread slavery, Parish questions the morality of southerners while he calls slavery in the North only "nominal." He continues to make this dichotomy even stronger when he introduces his section on southern states:

> We now proceed to examine another section of our country. A new shade of character commences. We shall no longer describe a hardy race of industrious farmers, living together on terms of equality. Instead of the social villages of New England, and the middle states, their highly cultivated farms, and numerous flocks, and herds,

> we shall discover thinly scattered farm houses, some of them miserable hovels, and a few miles distant, a lofty mansion, surrounded by 100 negro huts; some of those wretched inhabitants are in rags; some naked; some of them black; some partly *white*; an index of their morals (Parish 1812, 105; emphasis original).

Adams also distinguishes North and South in the United States in his discussion of slavery. "Slavery, that bane of morals, and reproach of free governments, is hardly known in New England," contrasts Adams (1827, 112 & 141) with "Labour here [southern states] is thought disreputable for a white man." Despite his apparent outrage at slavery, Adams rationalizes the practice when he describes slaves from the Ivory Coast. Adams (1827, 298-299) claims, "They are distinguished from all the other Negroes by firmness, both of body and mind; by activity, courage and elevation of soul which prompts them to enterprises of difficulty and danger, and enables them to meet tortures and death with fortitude and indifference." It is as if these people were naturally equipped with a propensity for slavery.

In these early nineteenth century geography schoolbooks, over and over again we see examples of statements that slavery is immoral, yet the authors give plenty of reasons as to why such poor treatment of people with black skin is acceptable. Described as physically unattractive and even repulsive in some statements, Africans are repeatedly labeled savage cannibals who are incapable of progress unless there is intervention by some kind, virtuous, white westerner, particularly from Europe or the United States (most likely a missionary).

Dwight, Parish, Willetts, J. Morse, S. E. Morse, and Adams worked to construct a homogeneous and virtuous nation by "othering" and exoticizing numerous people at

home and abroad. They constructed a standard for comparison and emphasized it throughout their schoolbooks. Students attempting to commit this information to memory were given little detail or explanation for a myriad of cultural practices markedly different from their own. Unless these students had additional information from some source other than their textbooks, they may have easily incorporated such prejudicial stereotypes into their body of knowledge. These stereotypes were further reinforced by other educational institutions such as the popular press and the pulpit. The constructions in the schoolbooks from the first three decades of the nineteenth century continue, but from the antebellum period through Reconstruction, we see the advent of visual images.

# CHAPTER 6
# CONFIRMING THE NATION

From the antebellum period through the Civil War and reconstruction, the landscape of the United States radically changed. Rapid urbanization, expanding transportation, burgeoning industrialization, shifting political alliances, and increasingly diversified immigration became powerful stimuli for education reform. People looked to schooling in order to help ameliorate social disharmony resulting from the shifting economic, social, political, and cultural climate of the United States. The success of the common school movement attests to an overwhelming desire of varying constituents to minimize social unrest. Common schools intended to instill in all students a common core of values, manifested in the curriculum and schoolbooks. The set of common political and moral values worked to marginalize non-white, non-middle class, and non-Protestant people in the United States and elsewhere at the same time it further "normalized" the dominant cultural group. The socially constructed national identity of the United States throughout the middle decades of the nineteenth century underscores the burgeoning transportation and industrialization at the expense of the real daily lives of ordinary, yet diverse people.

The eight geography schoolbooks published from 1832 to 1874 analyzed in this chapter include *A Practical System of Modern Geography* (1832) by Jesse Olney, *A System of Modern Geography* (1849) by Samuel Augustus Mitchell, *Peter Parley's Geography for Beginners* (1850) by Samuel Griswold Goodrich, *Cornell's Primary Geography* (1854) by Sarah Sophie Cornell, *Geography on the Productive System* (1856) by Roswell C. Smith, *Monteith's Manual of Geography* (1868) by James Monteith,

*Primary Geography* (1870) by Adolph Von Steinwehr and Daniel G. Brinton, and *Elementary Geography* (1874) by James Monteith. The authors, like those of the first three decades of the nineteenth century, continue to construct a homogeneous national identity, "othering" already marginalized groups living in the United States and elsewhere.

## Approach

Many schools had already introduced geography by 1825, so later in the century, schoolbook authors placed less emphasis on the importance of studying geography but continued to argue for the approach used in their particular book (Elson 1964, 5; Pulliam and Van Patten 1991, 65). Olney (1832, v) explains that geography has lately become universal in common schools, but that many of the textbooks are unsuitable for young students. Similarly, Monteith (1868, 4) claims, "Geography has become such a favorite study in our schools, that almost as soon as a child has learned to read, he makes a beginning in this interesting branch." Mitchell has a broader purpose for geography. He suggests studying geography in order to gain an advantage over those who do not "possess" such knowledge. While he tells us studying geography "opens and enlarges the mind," he insinuates that his underlying purpose is really to strengthen colonization and that this sort of control is deemed natural. "The desire to become acquainted with the country they ['mankind'] lived in, and to determine and establish its boundaries, would naturally direct their attention to it," declares Mitchell (1849, 6). Cornell provides no explanation as to why students should study geography, but she does explain why they should use her book. Echoing many of the authors, Cornell (1854, 6) claims that even the "best class-books on the subject" have certain defects impeding student learning which

her text hopes to remedy. The approach suggested by Von Steinwehr and Brinton is similar to Monteith's and Olney's. They explain, "The importance of the study of geography is generally conceded, and due prominence is given it in every liberal system of education (Von Steinwehr and Brinton 1870, 3)." Additional schoolbooks (Goodrich 1850; Smith 1856; Monteith 1874) critiqued in this section do not include a stated purpose, yet all of the books are analogous in teaching methodology.

## Teaching methodology

All of the geography schoolbooks analyzed in this study are catechismal in style. Meant to be orderly and expeditious, the question-and-answer format nonetheless is often confusing and mundane. All begin with basic questions on vocabulary similar to Mitchell's (1849, 7) first question, "What is geography?" followed by the answer. Von Steinwehr and Brinton (1870) and Monteith (1874) use the same approach but reverse the order. They explain the definitions and then ask questions. The books also have lists of questions about maps. These lists are sometimes pages long and are typically divided into sections on North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Oceania. Again, Von Steinwehr and Brinton (1870) and Monteith (1874) use a slightly different approach where an explanation precedes questions without the endless lists. When they do include descriptions of particular countries, the authors often follow an explanation with questions except Olney (1832) and Monteith (1868) who present questions first. Two authors, however, differ further in their approaches.

Goodrich continues with a question-and-answer format in teaching methodology, yet introduces an approach that gains popularity later in the century. His geography schoolbook is an early attempt at narrative. In the first three pages, the reader

accompanies a youth called Thomas on a journey. Goodrich (1850, 10) explains what Thomas witnesses with each illustration and concludes, "I wish you to get that knowledge which you would acquire by travelling [*sic*] over the different parts of the world." Goodrich's innovation continues with what he refers to as "Review in Rhyme" to enliven the lessons and aid memorization. Here are a few lines from one of the four rhymes titled, "The Works of God and Man":

> And now, kind readers, great and small,
> Remember what I tell you, all.
> God made the ocean and the land;
> He placed the mountains where they stand;
> The storms that speak in thunder-tone,--
> All nature's works are God's alone.
> In making these man takes no part—
> His works are only those of art.
> Houses and churches, papers, pens,
> Books, hats, shoes, clothing,--these are men's.

In terms of teaching methodology, Goodrich introduces some innovative ideas, yet in content most of his book remains a pedantic catechism.

Cornell's approach is much more matter-of-fact. Prior to her discussions on the various constructed divisions of North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Oceania, she includes a section called "Memory's Aid." Here, she lists countries, capital cities, islands, peninsulas, capes, mountains, oceans, seas, gulfs and bays, straits, channels, lakes, and rivers. In her discussions of the various divisions, Cornell (1854, 63) includes little information except geographic location, climate conditions, productions, and capital cities, for example, "Turkey is situated in the western part of Asia. It is a very fine and fertile region, but badly cultivated. Among the noted productions are pomegranates, olives, and figs. Constantinople, the capital city, is situated in Turkey in

Europe." Because Cornell's (1854, 6) descriptions are so limited, we understand her emphasis on visual images to "aid understanding" and "quicken interest."

This collection of books differs from geography textbooks from the first three decades of the nineteenth century in that all contain numerous visual illustrations. The later illustrations are finer in detail because of technological developments in printing processes, yet the content varies little. Mitchell (1849) and Von Steinwehr and Brinton (1870) are the only authors who do not directly mention the use of visuals in their books. Olney (1832, v) describes the importance of visuals in the learning process, "Children, instead of being made to commit definitions to memory, should, as much as possible, at the beginning, be taught by means of the eye."

Besides enhancing learning, some authors claim their illustrations impart accuracy (implying "objectivity"). For example, Goodrich (1850, 4) says, "The engravings are selected with care, and are designed at once to convey accurate knowledge, and to rivet the several topics on the mind, on the principles of mnemonical association." Cornell's (1854, 6) stated purpose for visuals is admittedly more grand, "In order to quicken the interest of the pupil, and bring his imagination to the aid of his understanding, the main features of the lessons are also *pictorially* presented in a series of designs exquisitely drawn and engraved, that, while they serve to instruct, they may also contribute to elevate and refine the taste of the pupil (emphasis original)." The advertisement for Smith's (1856, n.p.) schoolbook begins by emphasizing the visual images, "This work has been very much enlarged, *embellished with new illustrations throughout*, designed expressly for it, critically corrected, and thoroughly revised (emphasis original)." The visuals are obviously important to the authors and publishers as they stress their careful selection,

increasingly improved quality, and aid in learning. Monteith (1868, 4) underscores this sentiment, "The illustrations are of the best character; several new views, taken from photographs, appear in this edition."

By the mid 1870s, visual images become commonplace and authors increase their emphasis on illustrations. Monteith (1874, 2) tells the reader, "It contains numerous pictures of the people in different countries, showing their characteristic dress and features." The emphasis on visuals is important in that they immediately convey information, yet we must be aware that they are as subjective as the written word, perhaps more so. They are socially constructed to express certain meanings. And, without any explanation of the image, (mis)interpretation is wide open.

## Socio-economic class

When dealing with issues related to socio-economic status, these authors typically disguise privilege as something inherent, natural, and innate. Rather than confronting the effects of colonization on the colonized, they prefer to justify such actions based on the conjectural "appalling" conditions of places like Africa or India. Moreover, it would shatter their construction of a virtuous, homogeneous nation if they admitted that the prosperity of the United States resulted from something other than the hard work of the settlers' descendants.

### Celebrating the United States

These authors, like those of the first three decades of the nineteenth century, are similarly celebratory of the United States. For Olney (1832, 51):

> The United States are the most interesting and important division of the western continent; and are distinguished for the excellence of their

> government,--the rapid increase of the population,--and for the intelligence, industry, and enterprise of the inhabitants.

In his discussion of the "founding" of the United States, Olney emphasizes the oppressive acts of the English government on the colonists. Colonial oppression of non-white cultural groups, however, never receives the same treatment by Olney.

Praise for the United States continues in Mitchell's (1849, 98) geography schoolbook:

> They occupy the most valuable and productive part of North America, and rank amongst the most powerful, commercial, and wealthy nations of the globe. They are distinguished for the freedom and excellence of their political institutions, the rapid increase of the population, and for the intelligence, industry, and enterprise of the inhabitants.

While Mitchell's characterization echoes Olney's, the visual image preceding his description is particularly interesting (see Figure 6.1). The allegorical visual is filled with symbols of the United States. As a potent image of the nation, the representation includes the emerging industrialization with a railroad, ships, and factories. Although the location is not specific, we see a building that resembles the capital in Washington, D. C. Perhaps more importantly, we recognize the three strongest symbols of the flag, eagle, and lady liberty. Here, liberty is personified as an American Indian woman wearing the typical tunic costume and crown granted such allegorical personifications. While we recognize the symbolic liberty, the underlying message also deserves attention. As Thomas Hylland Eriksen (1993, 103) reminds us, "The use of ethnic symbols in nationalism is intended to stimulate reflection on one's own cultural distinctiveness and thereby create a feeling of nationhood." The cultural distinctiveness here is the American

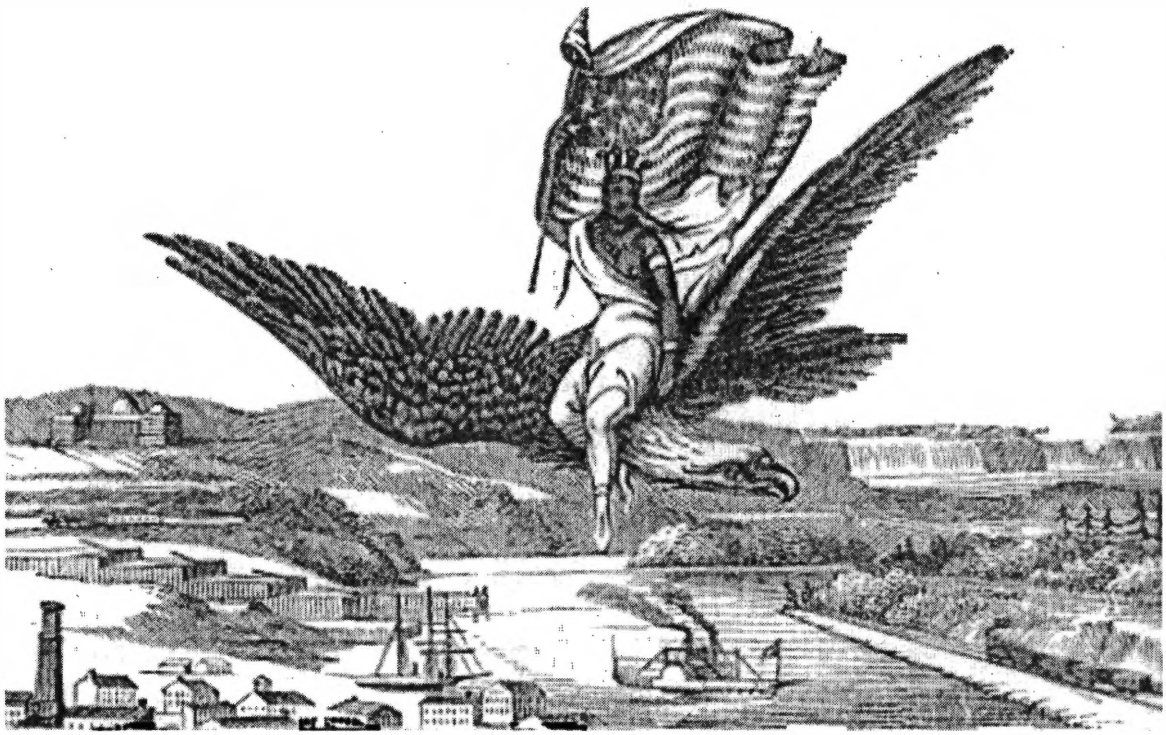

Figure 6.1. Allegory of the United States

Indian woman, an original inhabitant of the land. That she becomes co-opted as a national symbol of the United States appears to be an attempt to reconcile the past with the present and future. As a national symbol, it accentuates the myth of the nation. But rather than being a benign symbol of liberty, its use raises a conflict over identity. Women as symbols of virtue and liberty are common, but, according to Linda McDowell (1999, 199), "the symbolic images of women often bear little or no relation to the position of women in those societies at particular times." So, instead of a white woman of European descent as the personification, Mitchell chose an American Indian woman, perhaps meaning to reconcile by this explicit inclusion the inhumane treatment, colonization, and murder of Native Americans. More likely, however, it is her partial nudity that caused her to be given the distinctive identity of Native American. To show a white woman partially clothed may have sent the wrong messages to school children at the time, besides such a picture might confuse the constructed distinction so carefully made between so-called "civilized" and "savage" cultures.

The government of the United States is celebrated in the geography schoolbook by Goodrich. At the beginning of his discussion of the United States, Goodrich (1850, 50) proudly proclaims, "The inhabitants of this country are not governed by kings and princes, as are the people of most other countries; but *they have a government made by themselves* (emphasis original)."

Cornell's representation of the United States, while somewhat similar to the other authors, is less overtly biased. She provides scanty information, usually limiting her questions to map exercises and her discussions to geographic locations, but some of her

visual images include brief descriptions. The image of the Capitol (see Figure 6.2) introducing her section on the United States includes the following statement:

> We would like to have you remember the appearance of the building in the above picture, as it is the finest and most important one in the United States. Here the officers who are chosen by the people of the several states assemble, to make laws for the whole country (Cornell 1854, 32).

Not as symbolically loaded as Mitchell's, Cornell's image suggests order through its symmetry, enterprise through its detailed architectural design, and a degree of ingenuity again with the neoclassical building style.

The importance and prosperity of the United States is also emphasized by Smith whose comments are equally ingratiating. Known for its freedom, excellence of government, burgeoning wealth and population, and general diffusion of knowledge, according to Smith (1856, 101):

> The United States are the most important political division on the Western Continent. All power is vested in the people. They make their own laws, and choose from among themselves, officers to execute them.

This introduction is preceded by an allegory of the United States, but without a human figure. An eagle with wings spread hovers above the coat of arms of the United States. These symbols while seemingly innocuous, remind the viewer of the national identity they are expected to hold dear.

In his introduction to the United States, Monteith includes an allegory similar to Smith's with the American eagle hovering over the coat of arms. His description, however, is more scanty. The strict question-and-answer format prohibits discussion. Monteith (1868, 30) asks, "What form of government did the Americans adopt?" to

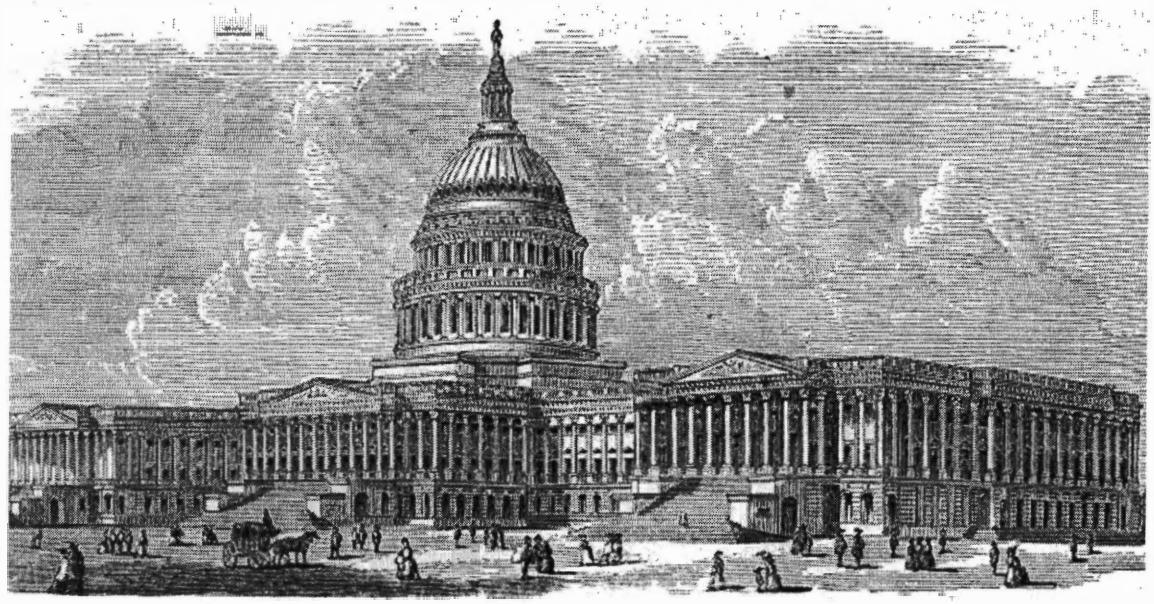

Figure 6.2. Capitol at Washington

which he answers, "A Republican form of Government."

In a discussion of the various forms of government, Olney (1832, 260) describes a republic as "a government in which the people choose their own rulers; as in the United States." Mitchell (1849, 36) similarly defines a republic, "A country whose laws are made by representatives chosen by the people; as the United States." Goodrich's (1850, 160) description is slightly different, "In the United States, and various other ***republics***, the people are ***free***, and they choose their own rulers (emphasis original)." Monteith (1868, 9), when describing various forms of government, explains a republic is "A country whose laws are made and executed by men elected by the people." "This country is a republic," declare von Steinwehr and Brinton (1870, 31), "The people elect persons to make the laws." They are seemingly less flattering in their description, and the matter-of-fact tone suggests "objectivity." Monteith in his later geography schoolbook continues his adulation. Describing various governments, he says:

> In some countries the rulers or highest officers are elected from time to time by **the people**. Countries which have this form of government are called **republics**. The greatest republic in the world is **the country we live in** (Monteith 1874, 15; emphasis original).

Then, in his introduction to the United States, Monteith (1874, 49) again explains a republican form of government, and ingratiates, "People have come to the United States from almost **every country in the world**, because here **they enjoy more freedom and obtain a better reward for their industry, than in any other country** (emphasis original). Monteith presents an uncritical view of the United States and fails to consider a larger context for immigration and economics. Most of the authors fail to recognize that

at the time only a select few were are allowed to participate in the process of election. The "unexampled prosperity" of the United States is presented as a natural sort of common sense without the recognition that that prosperity came at the expense of Native Americans, African Americans, and women.

**Regional bias**

Socio-economic bias shows in the authors' treatment of various regions of the United States. Residents of New England are repeatedly described as intelligent, moral, industrious, and enterprising (Olney 1832, 65). Mitchell's characterization adds education and religion. He says New Englanders have always been a religious people and that education is more generally diffused than anywhere else in the world. Mitchell (1849, 108) emphasizes education in his conclusion, "It is rare to find in any part of the Eastern States, persons of mature age, who are ignorant of reading, writing, and arithmetic." Goodrich includes sobriety along with the characteristics Olney and Mitchell prescribe, and his carefully chosen illustration addresses many of these characteristics (see Figure 6.3). An elaborate two-story schoolhouse, a church, manufacturers, and ships all help to reinforce the industrious stereotype of New Englanders. The message that hard work parallels morality and potentially wealth is evident with the farmer figure in the foreground leading his cattle. Smith (1856, 109), Monteith (1868, 40), and Von Steinwehr and Brinton (1870, 33) all emphasize religion, educational opportunities, and the enterprising spirit of New Englanders. The authors insinuate that these characteristics are somehow innate and natural rather than influenced by the social, cultural, and economic prosperity of the region. They communicate that through hard work and superior morality, New Englanders are (or should be) role models

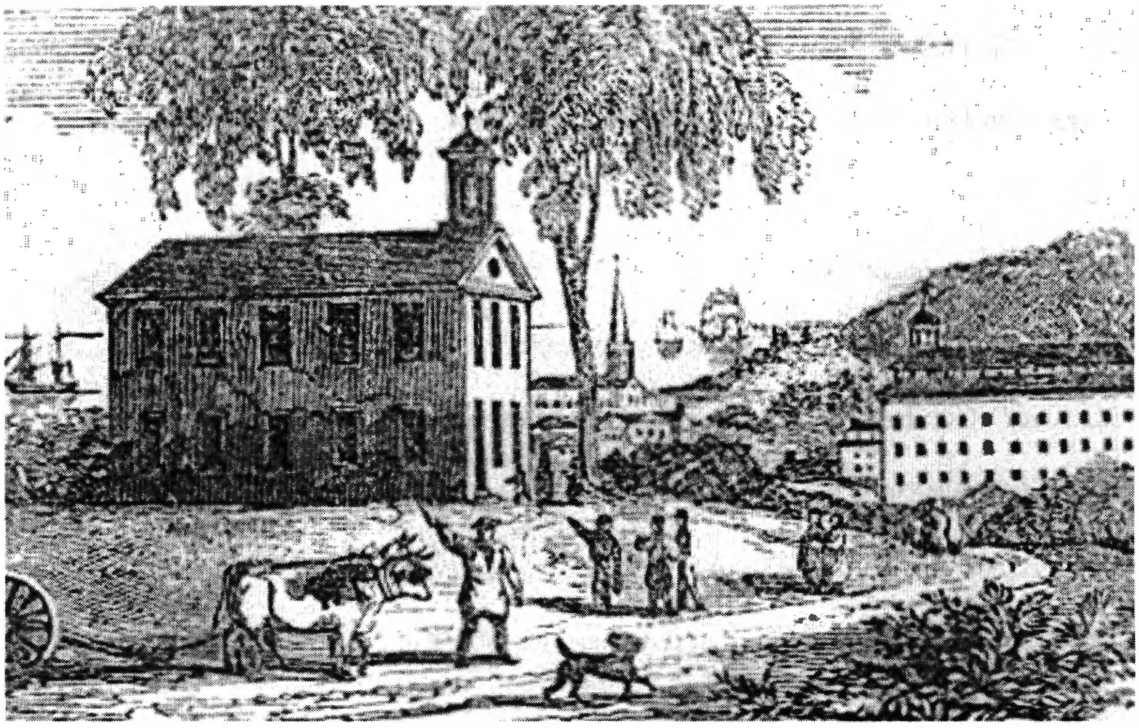

Figure 6.3. School-house, manufactories, and ships

for the rest of the country. Although New England may have been prosperous in comparison to other regions in the United States, the authors fail to really situate the position of people in that society at that particular time. New England was experiencing substantial shifts with urbanization, industrialization, and heavy immigration of Irish Catholics during the nineteenth century. While these authors frequently depict industrialization as progress, they do not address the dislocations that accompanied such substantial change.

Class bias pervades these nineteenth century geography schoolbooks in almost every aspect. Because these authors are New Englanders themselves, regional social class bias surfaces over and over again. A false dichotomy between North and South is continually reinforced. Olney (1832, 92) describes people in the South as belonging to "higher" or "lower" classes; the former are "well informed, polite, and hospitable," while the latter are "rude and extremely ignorant." Mitchell's characterization echoes Olney's, and he expands it by addressing education. According to Mitchell (1849, 134), the wealthy are educated, but the poor are not. Cornell, again, avoids the issue all together by adhering to her limited information of location, climate, productions, and capital cities. Smith's (1856, 134) characterization is almost identical to Olney's, "The richer class in these states are generally intelligent, refined, and remarkably hospitable, but the poor are usually rude and ignorant." The three books published after the Civil War avoid the North/South dichotomy and do not address socio-economic status in relation to education.

**European models**

The ingratiating characteristics granted New Englanders also stems from their ancestry. Smith (1856, 105), Monteith (1868, 40; 1874, 22), and Mitchell (1849, 108) are careful to say that people in New England are either from England or are descendants of previous immigrants from England despite the heavy influx of Irish Catholic immigrants between the 1820s and 1850s. Mitchell (1849, 108) makes the connection between English heritage and industriousness quite clear, "The inhabitants of the Eastern States are almost exclusively of unmixed English origin; and, from the earliest settlement of their country, have been used to habits of industry, economy, and enterprise." The nineteenth century student could draw this analogy without such an explanation; the authors typically glorified Europe, in general, and England, in particular.

Europe "is distinguished for learning and science, for excellence in the useful and elegant arts, and for the intelligence, refinement, activity and enterprise of its inhabitants," according to Olney (1832, 155) who also includes an elaborate allegorical visual of Europe (see Figure 6.4). Three white female figures personify agriculture, arts and literature, and commerce. The female figure on the left holds a bundle of wheat in her right hand and a sickle in her left. A plow and cornucopia are to her immediate right. All of these symbols tell us she represents the bounty of Europe; she resembles earlier mother earth personifications of Rome. The central figure holds a painter's palette in her left hand and an eagle in her right that symbolize learning and the arts. The figure on the right personifies commerce; she has import/export packages and a ship at her immediate left. More importantly, however, is the placement of her foot on a globe. The representation of power is obvious; through colonization and imperialism, Europe rules


Figure 6.4. Allegory of Europe

the world. While the representation suggests Europe as a whole, what it really characterizes is Western Europe with cultures, religions, and people similar to the English immigrants of the United States.

In regards to Europe, Mitchell considers Europe the most important, most populated, and best cultivated. He touches on colonization and imperialism, but fails to really address it or explain how such acts have contributed to the wealth of Europe. He claims that, "In modern times it has been the point from which civilization and knowledge have been extended to other nations, and its emigrants have peopled all the civilized countries of the other parts of the world (Mitchell 1849, 213)." Here Mitchell purports the theory of "Eurocentric diffusionism" felicitously explained by J. M. Blaut (1993) in *The Colonizer's Model of the World*. Mitchell's interpretation of diffusionism constructs Europe (or the West) as superior to non-Europe (or the East). Europe is constructed as the center of knowledge, progress, and civilization from which these traits and ideas may flow (or be diffused) to "other" parts of the world. Just as Mitchell's statement exemplifies, Blaut (1993, 6) reminds us, "Textbooks are an important window into a culture; more than just books, they are semiofficial statements of exactly what the opinion-forming elite of the culture want the educated youth of that culture to believe to be true about the past and the present world."

Goodrich also purports a theory of diffusion from Europe, but warns his reader that despite the splendor of Europe and its most highly civilized status, there is much poverty. The theme of the lucky resident of the United States surfaces when Goodrich says, "After such a visit, you will return to your own country, rejoicing that, although we have less splendor, we have more general comfort, than is to be found in Europe

(Goodrich 1850, 101)." Although Goodrich generally flatters Europe, he manages to reinforce the mythical national character of the United States.

The distinguished character of Europe surfaces again in Smith's geography schoolbook. And, he, like Mitchell, touches on colonization and imperialism with a degree of praise. Extolling the virtues of Europe, Smith (1856, 213) concludes, "Europe is distinguished for its political influence, by which it has heretofore controlled, in a great degree, the other divisions of the globe." Within their constructions of Europe, the authors routinely refer to the inhabitants of England and Great Britain in a flattering manner. Olney (1832, 178), for example, says, "The English are intelligent, brave, industrious and enterprising; but possess great national pride." His characterization here is rather similar to the qualities he granted New Englanders. Mitchell's (1849, 233) description mirrors Olney's:

> Great Britain is one of the most influential states in the world, and surpasses every other for the extent and variety of its manufactures, and for its commercial and naval importance. The intelligence, and industry of its inhabitants are no where equaled, except in the United States.

Mitchell (1849, 235) then condemns England for its unequal distribution of wealth, but despite the luxury and corruption, he says benevolence is "a striking characteristic in the national character." Goodrich (1850, 103) too criticizes England for its economic disparity, "There is a great deal of poverty, too, and many of the inhabitants work very hard, and still suffer for want of the comforts of life."

Monteith draws the connection between inhabitants of the United States and Great Britain through language. He says the British are the people in Europe who speak the

same language as people in the Untied States. Monteith (1874, 57) continues his characterization by addressing wealth and power, "The British Government, usually called **Great Britain**, controls not only the British Isles, but also **important countries and islands in almost every part of the earth** (emphasis original)." Like Mitchell and Smith, Monteith brushes over colonization and imperialism without explaining the prosperity of Great Britain in association to its oppressive relationships.

**Constructions of cultural development**

The authors make assumptions based on social class standing by categorizing large groups of people according to their (the authors') construction of "civilization." The geography schoolbooks contain sections with titles such as "State of Society" (Olney 1832, 258; Goodrich 1850, 159; Smith 1856, 83), "Stages of Society" (Mitchell 1849, 42), or "Manner of Living" (Von Steinwehr and Brinton 1870, 17), where the authors categorize people according to varying hierarchical degrees of "civilization." Olney and Smith use the same labels and similar definitions: savage, half-civilized, civilized, and enlightened. Smith (1856, 84) defines so-called savage societies:

> They are for the most part grossly ignorant, with little or no knowledge of agriculture or the mechanic arts, have no written language or books, have but little notion of religion, and very rarely have any regular form of government. They are cruel, revengeful, indolent, and superstitious. They treat their women like slaves, buying and selling them at pleasure.

Examples of such societies include North American Indians, Africans, and "New Hollanders" (native Australians). The half-civilized according to Smith and Olney possess some knowledge of agriculture and have laws, religion, and books, but treat their

women like the "savages." The schoolbooks repeatedly characterize the Chinese as "half-civilized."

The "civilized" subsist on agriculture, commerce, manufacturing, have numerous books, and treat their women well. Neither Smith nor Olney provide an example of a civilized society. People in the "enlightened" state have almost perfected the arts and sciences and are distinguished for their industry, intelligence, and ingenuity. Examples of enlightened nations include the United States, England, France, and Germany, where according to Smith (1856, 85), "the female sex are fully elevated to their proper station in society, as equals with, and companions for the male sex." Smith includes a visual image to help clarify these categories for the reader (see Figure 6.5). The four categories Smith defines are pictured, yet there is a contradiction between his definitions and the visual. In his discussion, he uses Chinese as an example of "half-civilized," whereas the visual places them under the heading "civilized."

Mitchell constructs five categories of society: savage, barbarous, half-civilized, civilized, and enlightened. According to Mitchell (1849, 42), North and South American Indians, Australians, and people of New Guinea are "bloodthirsty," "savage cannibals" who "treat their women as slaves." "Barbarous" nations include Tartary, Arabia, Central Africa, and Abyssinia, where people subsist on agriculture and the simplest arts. China, Japan, Burma, Siam, Turkey, and Persia are "half-civilized," and according to Mitchell, they have written languages, laws, religion, books, and some commerce with foreigners, but generally treat their women as slaves. In the "civilized" nations of Russia, Spain, Portugal, Greece, and Mexico (predominantly Catholic or Orthodox rather than Protestant), the arts and sciences are well understood, and people subsist on agriculture,

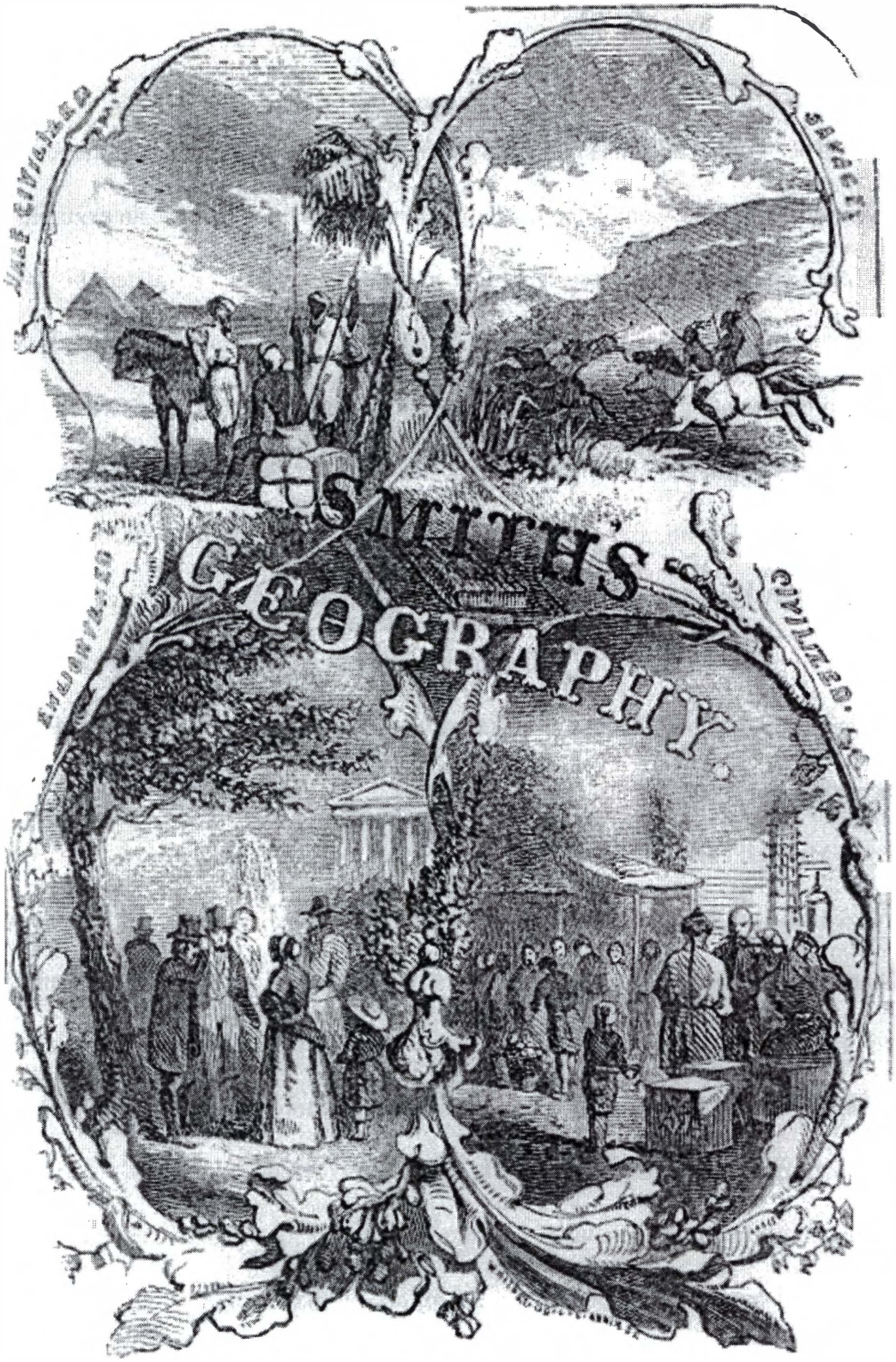


Figure 6.5. States of society

manufacturing, and commerce, but they are very ignorant and superstitious. Mitchell emphasizes that there is a great disparity between the upper and lower classes in the "civilized" nations. Descriptions of people in the enlightened nations are similar to Olney's and Smith's definitions. Mitchell (1849, 43) declares, "Females are treated with politeness and respect, the principles of free government are well understood, and education and learning are more general than among other nations."

Goodrich only has three categories: savage, barbarous, and civilized. The "savage" include Native Americans, Africans, "wild tribes of Asia," and people of Oceania. Laplanders, Moors, Arabs, Tartars, Siberians, Indians, and a great part of the Chinese are "barbarous," according to Goodrich. He categorizes the United States, Europe, some of Turkey, Egypt, Persia, China, and Japan as "civilized."

Von Steinwehr and Brinton also have three categories: civilized, half-civilized, and savage or uncivilized. These authors claim, "The greater portion of the civilized people live in Europe and America, and belong to the white race. They know more than other nations. This is the reason why they are more powerful, and live more comfortably (Von Steinwehr and Brinton 1870, 18)." The "half-civilized" lack the advanced transportation of railroads and steamboats, have few books and schools, and some, not all, live in homes. Von Steinwehr and Brinton say the Japanese and Chinese are the most advanced of the "half-civilized." The authors describe "savage" people, but the illustration speaks volumes (see Figure 6.6). Black men, wearing little clothing, are shown dancing in a circle. The two figures on the right with their backs to the viewer are indistinguishable, but the figure between these two and the dancing men appears as a demon-like figure with his arms raised in the air and horns on his head. The kangaroo in

Figure 6.6. A savage scene

the background suggests the scene takes place in Australia (kangaroos are repeatedly listed as mammals native to Australia in these geography schoolbooks) which is described over and over again as the most degraded of all places.

The authors construct these divisions as natural progressions from the least civilized to the most civilized with their own cultures, of course, at the peak of the hierarchy. They fail to address the implications of power in these categories. They never address the effects of colonization by such powers and how that transfers prosperity from the colonized to the colonizer. Their (mis)understanding of various cultures supports their claims of advancement for places like the United States. The authors, of course, construct a national identity for the United States in order to enhance its position in the minds of its "valued" citizens.

## Religion

In this second group of schoolbooks, Protestantism continues to prevail as one method of constructing a nationalist homogeneity of the United States. Some authors are more overt than others in their Protestant bias, yet they all make sure to distinguish between Christian and non-Christian religions. Within their treatment of Christian religions, we begin to see fewer anti-Catholic statements. Non-Christians, however, continue to be "othered" and "exoticized."

### Protestantism

Three authors, Olney, Mitchell, and Smith, emphasize the lack of an established religion in the United States. While the other authors do not include this statement, they characterize inhabitants of the United States as primarily Protestant. Olney includes a chart in his book of religious denominations in the United States in 1831. Out of the

twenty religions listed, eighteen are Protestant while the last two on the list are Roman Catholic followed by "Infidels." In terms of population, "Infidels" rank fourth out of twenty, while Roman Catholics are seventh. So, Olney's placement of these categories at the bottom of the list suggests his religious preference. Furthermore, Olney includes another chart in the back of his book listing various countries with their type of government, religion, state of society, and race. According to this chart, Protestantism is the prevailing religion of the United States.

Mitchell (1849, 101) informs the reader that that the people of the United States are primarily Protestant, but that there are some other denominations. He defines Christians as "Those who believe in Christ, as the savior of mankind (Mitchell 1849, 47)." Goodrich (1850, 158) provides a similar definition, "Christians believe in Christ." He goes on to say, "Christianity prevails in America and Europe, and these portions of the world are called *Christendom* (emphasis original)." Smith's (1856, 81) definition is almost identical to Mitchell's, as is Von Steinwehr and Brinton's (1870, 20), and Monteith's (1874, 15). Von Steinwehr and Brinton, however, are the only authors who mention Mormons in the United States. While the Mormon religion was gaining some attention in the popular press, it failed to receive much attention in the geography schoolbooks. In a brief description of the Utah territory, Von Steinwehr and Brinton (1870, 58) say, "The inhabitants are principally *Mormons*, a peculiar religious sect (emphasis original)."

**Anti-Catholic attitudes**

Only half of the geography schoolbooks published from the1830s through the 1870s includes any mention of Catholicism. And, the anti-Catholic attitudes, so

prevalent in the first three decades of the nineteenth century, are somewhat less derogatory. Olney (1832, 261), for example, says, "The Roman Catholics are those who acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope." His descriptions of primarily Catholic countries are more offensive; Olney describes the people of Portugal, Spain, and Italy as superstitious. Furthermore, Italy has fallen into disrepair, "Italy was *once* the garden of Europe, the parent of the arts and sciences, and mistress of the world; but owing to the indolence of the inhabitants, it is now one of the most feeble and powerless divisions of Europe (Olney 1832, 186)." We can only surmise that Catholicism is one of the causes.

Catholicism is again to blame for the ignorance of its followers, according to Mitchell. He tells us education is much neglected and the people are very ignorant in "Canada East," where the majority of inhabitants are French Canadians (Mitchell 1849, 94). Mitchell (1849, 182) also claims religious intolerance pervades in Mexico, where the "established" religion is Catholicism. South America, on the other hand, is more tolerant of religious persuasions despite the "establishment" of Catholicism (Mitchell 1849, 192). Mitchell's (1849, 248-250) treatment of Spain and Portugal is much like Olney's; Catholicism is the established religion and education is in general neglect. He even includes a separate section in order to discuss "The Popedom, or States of the Church" in Italy. Here, Mitchell (1849, 267) says, "It is ruled by the Pope, who is the head of the Catholic church, and is invested with absolute power, both spiritual and temporal."

Smith (1856, 81) treats predominantly Catholic countries similarly, and describes the Pope as "The head, or father, of the Roman Catholic Church, and his name is derived from the Latin *papa*, signifying *father* (emphasis original)." In his description of Mexico,

Smith (1856, 188) informs us that Roman Catholicism is the only religion tolerated. People in Spain are characterized as luxurious, indolent, revengeful, and ignorant (Smith 1856, 241). And, of course, "Italy," according to Smith (1856, 244), "once the garden of Europe, the parent of the arts and sciences, and the mistress of the world, though much fallen from what is once was, is still one of the most interesting countries in the world." Again, the reader can only presume this decline into opprobiousness is the result of Catholicism.

In comparison to the previous degradations of Catholicism, Von Steinwehr and Brinton's description of Italy is mundane. They tell us Rome is the capital of Italy and is famous for its history and buildings, old and new; "It [Rome] is also the residence of the Pope, the head of the Roman Catholic Church (Von Steinwehr and Brinton 1870, 73)." They manage to describe primarily Catholic countries without the disparaging remarks made by Olney, Smith, or Mitchell.

**Idolaters, pagans, and heathens**

Olney (1832, 261) defines pagans or heathens as "those who believe in false gods, and worship idols, beasts, reptiles, &c." In his table following the definitions of various religions, Olney includes the following countries and people as pagan or heathen: American Indians, Amazonia, Patagonia, Hindustan, Tibet, Birman Empire [Indochina], Empire of Tonkin [northern Vietnam], China, Siberia, and Japan. Various countries in Africa would most certainly be categorized by Olney as pagan or heathen, but Africa does not even make the list. Olney justifies the exclusion because so little is known about Africa except the northern regions.

Pagans or heathens are defined by Mitchell (1849, 48) as, "Those who believe in false Gods, and who worship idols, beasts, birds, serpents, &c." Even though they outnumber Christians, Mitchell (1849, 48) confirms supposed Christian superiority:

> The Christian nations are much superior in knowledge and power to all others, and through the increase of their colonies, the influence of the press, and the exertions of the Missionaries, will no doubt, in the course of a few generations, spread their religion over the greater part of the earth.

Here Mitchell justifies colonization in order to further promote Christianity, and, at the same time, he acknowledges the influential power of the printed word.

Goodrich saves his definitions of various religions until the very end of his book. He claims that pagans are "savage nations" that "worship stones, trees, and animals (Goodrich 1850, 160)." Smith, on the other hand, includes his constructions of various religions early on in his book. According to Smith (1856, 82), pagans or heathens are, "Those who believe in many false gods, and who worship various objects and idols, such as the sun, moon, and stars; different kinds of animals; also wood and stone, and images which they themselves have made." Von Steinwehr and Brinton define pagans as those people who think there are many gods. "Some carve images of wood and stone, and pray to them for help and protection," say Von Steinwehr and Brinton (1870, 21) of "the blacks in Africa and Australia, the red men in America, and many belonging to the yellow and brown race in Asia." Their accompanying image, titled "An Idol," illustrates their description of carved images (see Figure 6.7). The visual illustration exoticizes this un-named religion, and the authors fail to even tell the reader which culture supposedly worships this idol. Monteith (1874, 15), in his later geography schoolbook, defines

Figure 6.7. An idol

heathens as those who "worship idols and do not acknowledge the true God," and he says that these people live in Asia and Africa, and comprise more than half the population of the world.

Olney, in his descriptions of various cultures, limits the label pagans to Polynesians. According to Olney (1832, 226):

> They were formerly Pagans, and were accustomed to sacrifice human victims to their gods. But in the Sandwich and Society Islands, they have destroyedtheir idols, and have received Christian Missionaries. Many have been taught to read and write; and numbers have been converted to Christianity.

Renouncing of idols in Hawaii is popular in these geography schoolbooks. Mitchell (1849, 335) says people here destroyed their idols in 1819 and have accepted the Christian religion introduced by missionaries from the United States. He even includes a visual image to enhance his message (see Figure 6.8). The idol itself appears as a demon surrounded by fire. Four figures actively work to keep the fire blazing while another five figures, in the background on the right, appear to dance in celebration. The foremost figure on the right side raises his hand as if to suggest the err of his past (pagan) ways. Moreover, the men in this illustration are (re)presented wearing diaper-like garments on the lower half of their bodies further suggesting their transitional state from pagans to Christians.

Goodrich continues with this theme of idol renouncing in Hawaii. The natives here, according to Goodrich, have been converted to Christianity with the help of missionaries from the United States. Conversion is obviously welcome if we accept

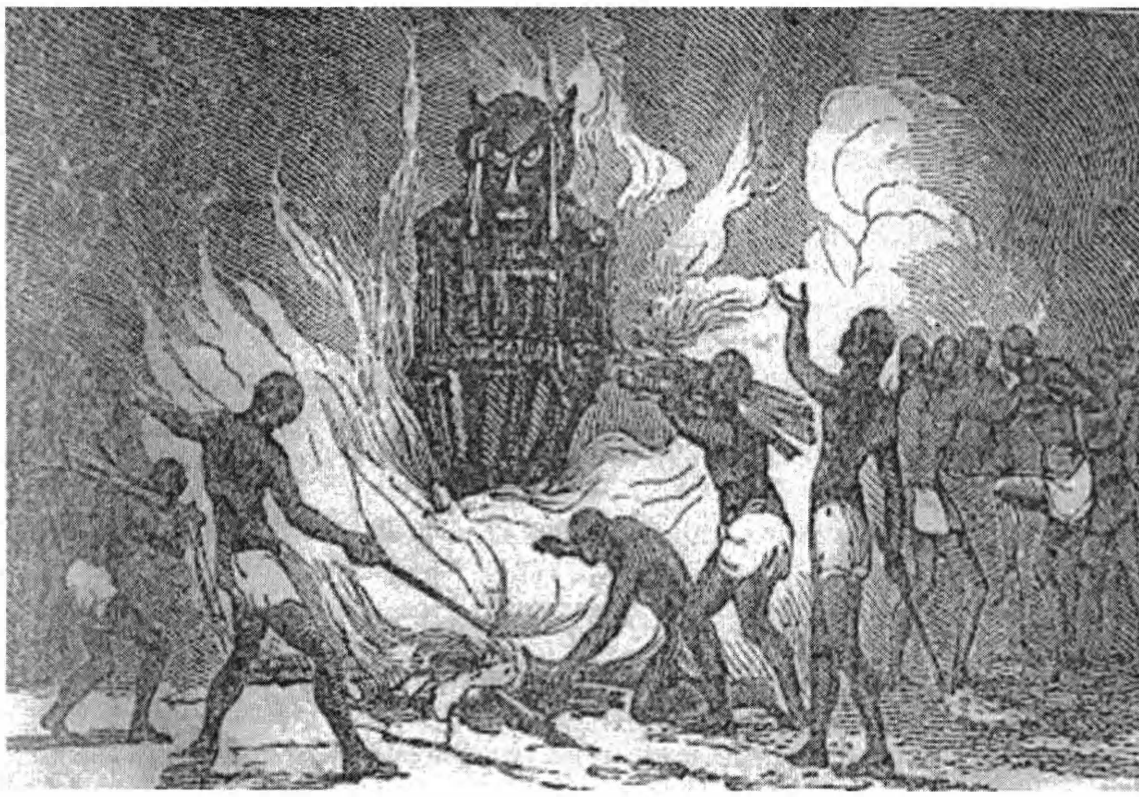

Figure 6.8. Sandwich Islanders burning an idol

Goodrich's (1850, 157) statement, "The people have adopted many of the arts of civilized life, and appear to be very happy." The accompanying illustration, however, is problematic (see Figure 6.9). A Christian missionary proselytizes to six Hawaiian natives; three are standing and three are sitting. Two of the natives reach their hand out as if to accept the word of the missionary. The standing female figure rests her head on her hand suggesting she is listening intently. The two female figures with exposed breasts complicate the visual. These authors certainly would not include an image of a Western woman in such a manner. The exposure is meant to suggest the savage "nature" of these natives at the same time it objectifies women. As Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins (1993, 115) and Linda Steet (2000, 68) remind us, viewing women's bodies implies ideas about race, gender, and sexuality that are never innocent or unmediated.

Nineteenth century geography schoolbook authors would like us to believe that native Hawaiians and Polynesians in general, were cannibals who offered human sacrifices. Smith, like the other authors, constructs his representation by emphasizing missionaries. Not only have the natives learned to read and write, but they have also embraced Christianity (Smith 1856, 314). Von Steinwehr and Brinton (1870, 84) similarly state that the natives of the Sandwich Islands [Hawaii] "have been instructed by American missionaries, and are now quite civilized." The connection between Christianity and civilization is overt. The context of the authors' experience in the nineteenth century United States hindered them from drawing any other conclusion. Hence, the emphasis on missionaries continues to prevail in Olney's and Smith's discussions of New Zealand. Olney (1832, 224) tells us the blessings of Christianity and civilization have been introduced by English missionaries, "The natives manifest a

Figure 6.9. Missionary preaching to Sandwich Islanders

strong desire for improvement, and have made considerable progress in the arts of civilized life." According to Smith (1856, 312), the inhabitants of New Zealand were once cannibals but, "Since the establishment of missionary stations, they have made considerable advancement in civilization."

India is also often described as a primarily pagan country, yet Hinduism receives less degrading attention than in the previously analyzed geography schoolbooks. Mitchell (1849, 292) emphasizes missionaries pushing Christian conversion, "Many of the natives have renounced their false gods; and some have even become missionaries." Goodrich (1850, 146), while describing India, informs his readers that, "Christian missionaries have converted some of these people from their idolatries." Smith attributes a supposed lack of progress in India to Hinduism, the prevailing religion, and Islam. He attempts to persuade his reader of this relationship between prayers and religion by saying, "Their religion and customs are so fixed as to seem almost unalterable, having undergone little or no change since India was first known (Smith 1856, 269)." Moreover, Monteith (1874, 63) superficially claims people who practice Hinduism "are nearly all **heathens**, and **very ignorant** (emphasis original)."

Asia is problematic for these nineteenth century geography schoolbook authors because, as they repeatedly tell us, this is the setting for creation and the birth place of Jesus Christ. Despite these "historic" events, Asia, according to these authors, remains primarily pagan. But, if the people here decide to choose Christianity, their society will most likely experience advancement:

> Though nearly the whole of this vast multitude is involved in heathen darkness, yet the exertions of Christian missionaries, and the distribution of the

> Scriptures in various Asiatic languages, will no doubt in time enlighten the nations, and lead to the spiritual redemption of this great continent (Mitchell 1849, 278).

Goodrich describes Asia as the seat of humanity three different times in his book. First, in his introduction to the eastern hemisphere, Goodrich (1850, 97) says this is the place where Adam and Eve dwelt. He later repeats, in his description of Asia, that Adam and Eve lived here, and here, "our Savior died for the redemption of mankind (Goodrich 1850, 139)." In Goodrich's (1850, 151) history of Asia, he again tells us, "The most interesting event in the history of Asia, is the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ." Instead of presenting a history of Asia, he uses this section of his schoolbook to proselytize Christianity.

Smith (1856, 258) too tells us Asia is where "our first parents were created" and "our Savior" appeared. In a history and description of Asia, Monteith repeats that Adam and Eve were the first inhabitants of the earth, but Buddhism, a "kind of paganism," chiefly prevails in China, India, and Japan (Monteith 1868, 85). In his later geography schoolbook, Monteith (1874, 63) does not address Adam and Eve, but says Asia was first inhabited, "Civilization proceeded from **Asia into Africa**, and afterward from **Africa into Europe**. America received its civilization from **Europe** (emphasis original)."

Even when Goodrich attempts to explain various religions in Asia, his Protestant bias (or, at least, Christian bias) continues to show through. According to Goodrich, the Chinese are not very religious people, but that they follow the teaching of Confucius who taught them little about God. He continues to trivialize other religions by reporting that some people in China worship a deity called Fo who is represented as a "huge, fat man

(Goodrich 1850, 148)." Monteith (1874, 64) provides even less information, simply saying that the Chinese and Japanese are pagans.

**Islam**

As in the early nineteenth century geography schoolbooks, Islam is treated as an imitation of the "original" Christian religion, and because it lacks originality, it is (re)presented as deficient. Olney (1832, 261) reinforces this idea of a fraudulent imitation, "Mahometans are those who believe in Mahomet, an impostor of Arabia, who flourished 600 years after Christ." If Christ came first, Muhammad must surely be an imitation. Furthermore, since Arabs were associated so closely with Islam in these schoolbooks, the nineteenth century author insinuates characteristics of Arabs resulted from their religion. Accordingly, Olney (1832, 201) claims Arabs are "ignorant, savage and barbarous." Despite their advances in learning and science during the middle ages, "At present they are so illiterate, that but few can be found, who are able either to read or write (Olney 1832, 201)."

Mitchell's (1849, 47) definition of Muslims echoes Olney's, "those who believe in Mahomed, a religious imposter who lived in Arabia, about 600 years after Christ." In his description of Turkey, Mitchell relays that it was once a powerful state, but has fallen into the hands of Muslims. "In their religion they are strict Mahomedans. They call those who do not believe their creed infidels, and formerly esteemed it lawful to reduce to subjection all who refused to be converted to their faith," criticizes Mitchell (1849, 274). Perhaps, Mitchell ignores the fact that white, European settlers and missionaries committed such acts on Native Americans among other various cultural groups. Whatever his intention, Mitchell hypocritically characterizes people of Turkey here

because he, along with the other geography schoolbook authors, blame non-Christian (and non-Protestant) cultures for the very offenses transgressed by Christians (including Protestants).

Within a constructed hierarchy, ranging from inferior to superior, Mitchell prefers practicing Muslims in Africa over non-Muslims. He reasons that there are two races in Africa, African and Caucasian. Africans, according to Mitchell, are pagans, while the Caucasians are Mahomedans. Despite the supposedly false religion of Islam, Mitchell (1849, 305) says, "though superior to the African races, [Muslims] are still rude and barbarous." While Muslims are "othered" and exoticized, they are constructed as more "civilized" than "pagans." In addition, they are considered Caucasian further leading these authors to struggle with just how to represent such an amalgam without it shadowing the ideally constructed United States.

Goodrich (1850, 160), in his list of definitions of various religions, says, "Mahometans are the believers in Mahomet. The Turks in Europe and nearly one half the people of Africa and Asia, are Mahometans." Goodrich (1850, 116) says people in Turkey, "believe in an impostor called *Mahomet*; he wrote a book entitled the Koran, which is their Bible (emphasis original)." Then, in his discussion of Arabia, Goodrich (1850, 144) proclaims, "Mecca was the birthplace of Mahomet, and many thousands of pious pilgrims visit it every year. Medina contains the tomb of this celebrated impostor, and is held in great reverence by the Mahometans." While Goodrich obviously felt the need to include descriptions of Muslims, he perpetuates an exoticized construction that further degrades Islam and Muslim cultures at the same time it bolsters Christianity.

The impostor analogy also comes through in Smith's geography schoolbook. In his list of definitions of various religions, he echoes both Olney and Mitchell. Smith asserts, "Mohammedans are the followers of Mohammed, a religious impostor, who flourished in Arabia, about six hundred years after Christ." It is unusual, however, that Smith says that religious tolerance exists in Turkey, although he says the state religion is Mahometanism. He reverts back to the impostor theme in a discussion of Arabia. Smith (1856, 265) contends Mecca, "is celebrated for being the birthplace of the famous impostor, Mahomet, which causes it to be much resorted to by pilgrims from every part of the Mahommedan world." He even tells us Nubians in Africa are Muslim, but characteristically describes them as physically repulsive and degraded (Smith 1856, 297).

For the first time in this selection of books, a nineteenth century geography schoolbook author uses the term "Islam" in addition to Mohammedan. Monteith assigns the religion of Turkey as Islam, and, in a footnote, provides further information. He says, "Their creed is, 'There is no god but God, and Mohammed is his prophet.' It teaches praying five times every day, with washings, fasting, almsgiving, sobriety, and pilgrimage to Mecca (Monteith 1868, 77)." Although Monteith's book is overtly Protestant biased, here he suggests followers of Islam to be rather pious people. Monteith (1868, 85), however, quickly reverts back to condemning Muslims, like the other authors, when he explains Mohammed appeared six hundred years after Christ, and "Mohammedanism is a false religion." The use of the term Islam for Monteith in his 1868 geography schoolbook is lost only six years later. In his list of religions, Monteith (1874, 15) charges that, "The Mohammedans reject the Bible and accept the Koran, which contains certain sayings of **Mohammed**, a native of **Arabia**. They believe

Mohammed was **a prophet** (emphasis original)." He mentions Islam at only two other points; Mecca is the birthplace of Mohammed and the people of Persia are Mohammedans.

As the result of a false analogy between Christ and Christians and Mohammed and Mohammedans, through the 1870s, the authors continue to use a defective label when referring to Islam. Moreover, the authors remain threatened by Islam and project their own anxiety and prejudice on to Muslim cultures, in particular, and any non-Christian culture, in general. To not comply with Christianity was to question or doubt it, and Islam, to these authors flagrantly denied the power of Jesus Christ and challenged Christian-based superiority.

## Women

When an author renders a person or a cultural group invisible, whether intentionally or not, the message can be contradicting. Either the author assumes the audience already possesses this knowledge or familiarity, or the author, for whatever reason, prefers the audience to remain unknowledgeable or unfamiliar with the neglected topic. The authors of the geography schoolbooks analyzed in this chapter exclude a variety of women, repeatedly emphasize appearance and character, exoticize particular groups of women, and, sometimes, mention women's work, all in order to bolster the construction of the fortunate, white, middle-class, Protestant housewife, leisurely enjoying her life in the United States. Perhaps this helps to explain why women in the United States are never discussed, or even mentioned, in any of the eight geography schoolbooks analyzed here. Not that women anywhere receive detailed attention, but these women are never addressed because the authors assume their audience already

knows about the exalted position of women in the United States. Furthermore, by concentrating on women living outside the United States, the authors' exoticizing and "othering" appears more plausible. If they were to divulge "real" women's daily lives in the United States, the construction of the lucky housewife would crumble. When the authors do discuss women, they typically accentuate physical appearance and character.

**Appearance and character**

Women in Spain, who Smith (1856, 241) concludes, "are tall, but slender and beautiful: graceful in their manners and agreeable in conversation." This description immediately follows a characterization of men in Spain who Smith concludes as ignorant in comparison to their former state during the Roman Empire. Because of the profusion of Catholicism and Spain's competition with the United States for colonial power, Smith's conclusion is no surprise. Monteith's (1874, 61) characterization of people in Spain and Spanish America is more directly related to their character, "smoking is indulged by both **men** and **women** (emphasis original). Monteith provides the nineteenth century reader with information too scanty to develop any understanding of people in Spain.

Women in Japan, according to Mitchell (1849, 301), are educated and "enjoy the same degree of liberty as in Europe." Despite the advantages of these women in comparison to Chinese women, Mitchell is careful to warn the reader about particular customs that may hinder the character of these women. Such generalizations about appearance and character become more derogatory when the authors discuss specific cultural practices and customs markedly different than those of people living in the United States.

**Exoticized customs**

One of the practices most commonly addressed by these nineteenth century authors is Circassians (inhabitants of south Russia, specifically the Caucasus mountains) selling their daughters to men of Turkey and Persia. This is the only mention of women whatsoever in Olney's geography schoolbook. Olney (1832, 220) includes Georgians in his synopsis, "These nations [Circassia and Georgia] are celebrated for the beauty of their females; numbers of whom are sold by their parents to the Turks and Persians, and are considered the brightest ornaments of their seraglios." Mitchell (1849, 281) provides more information and a limited historical context, saying this custom is no longer practiced:

> The men are celebrated for their activity and valour, and the women for their beauty and elegance of form. Many of the latter were formerly sold by their parents as slaves to traders, who carried them to Turkey, Persia, and other countries, where they were purchased by the wealthy classes; but the Russians have abolished this barbarous traffic.

Goodrich's summary is more matter-of-fact. He simply states, "The Circassians are celebrated for their beauty, and parents sometimes sell their daughters to the Turks (Goodrich 1850, 149)." Smith's geography schoolbook includes Georgians in a characterization like Olney's. "Both of these tribes are deservedly celebrated for the beauty of their females, who are often sold by their parents to neighboring Mahommedan nations" (Smith 1856, 284).

These generalizations are problematic on a number of levels. Why is Mitchell the only author who reveals that this custom is no longer practiced? Whether intentionally or not, authors whose books were published later fail to include this information, suggesting

that the practice continues. Because the women are described as daughters, readers are led to believe that these are young women who are being forced into this practice. This, of course, compels the reader to call into question the morality of the parents. What horrible caregivers could commit such an atrocious act on their own children? By constructing the parents as cruel and barbarous, the authors fail to address the economic motivation behind such customs. Throughout all of these characterizations, the reader is also provided another example of the hideousness of Islam. Without ever directly discussing, in any depth, harems, polygamy, or marriage customs in Turkey, Persia, or various Muslim cultures, the authors imply these people are unrefined, rude, and corrupt. They are constructed as the antithesis of inhabitants of the United States.

The repeated declaration of beauty is also troublesome. The authors never explain what they mean by beautiful. Furthermore, what does such emphasis on beauty convey about the value of women? Are the authors suggesting that being sold is somehow their fault because they are so beautiful? Perhaps beauty is one of the only redeeming qualities for these authors, so they accentuate it. Regardless of the reason, Circassian women are repeatedly objectified as attractive commodities.

Polygamy is mentioned twice in these nineteenth century geography schoolbooks. In his description of the people of Abyssinia, Mitchell (1849, 316) states, "Intoxication is frequent, a plurality of wives is common, and great depravity of manners prevails." With such a degrading characterization, it is surprising that Mitchell claims these people are superior to their surrounding nations. Goodrich's mention of polygamy reveals the extent of these authors' lack of understanding of such a cultural practice. While describing Turkey, Goodrich (1850, 116) claims, "One man has often a great many wives, whom he

keeps shut up in a place called a *harem* (emphasis original)." Neither author ever uses the word polygamy or discusses it in any depth. Of course, without any analysis, the reader is meant to accept to the authors' constructions. Rather their constructions enhance difference and imply women living in the United States are lucky in comparison to these women who are (re)presented as secluded and depraved.

Mitchell and Monteith construct these women as victims of their cultures. When Mitchell characterizes people in Asia, the reader must assume he means Muslim cultures in Asia from his descriptions: "The women are generally kept in ignorance, and are not taught reading or writing; they are also, in many parts of Asia, regarded almost as slaves, live in strict retirement, and do not go abroad without being closely veiled" (Mitchell 1849, 277). Seclusion and veiling suggest cultures practicing Islam. In describing Turkish women, Monteith (1874, 60) similarly states, "The women are not allowed out of doors, without being closely **veiled**, and the education of girls is considered **unnecessary** (emphasis original)." The practices of seclusion and veiling are left unexplained by the authors, perhaps because they themselves did not understand such cultural customs, but, more likely, to enhance their constructions of these women as degraded, deprived victims.

The emphasis on education, or lack there of, reflects the popular campaigns for common schools in the United States. By this time (1849 through 1874), however, common schools were, for the most part, standard, so the debased construction of these women is meant to intensifies the dichotomy between "us" and "them."

The cultural practices of veiling and seclusion are popular visual images in many of these schoolbooks. Two images from Cornell's geography textbooks are thorough in

their representations of women's lives, yet they fail to really address the actual nineteenth century circumstances for these women (see Figure 6.10). "Life in Turkey" depicts two women at their leisure while a female servant brings them a drink and a male guardian-type smokes while watching over the women. The reader assumes the scene takes place inside the secluded women's quarters, and that all women in Turkey led such lives of leisure. The visual illustration, as well as the written text, fails to inform the reader that veiling and seclusion are marks of privilege prevalent in middle and upper class families.

"A Street in Cairo" (see Figure 6.11) shows seven veiled women accompanied by either male children or other male guardian-types. Four of the women are carrying goods on their heads. But perhaps more importantly, the buildings on each side of the street exemplify the architecture of seclusion. The windows or *masharabiyya* (Grube et al. 1978, 201) project from the buildings and are covered with screens that allow those inside to see out but prohibit anyone from seeing in. Although the illustration is remarkably thorough in its representation of Cairene women's lives, it fails to reveal what the actual circumstances were for these women in nineteenth century Cairo. The complexity of their realities were largely misunderstood and, therefore, misrepresented. More importantly, however, Muslim women were purposely misrepresented in order to enhance Western superiority.

Women in China and the practice of foot binding is, by far, the most popular topic about women for these authors. Mitchell (1849, 297) declares:

Figure 6.10. Life in Turkey

Figure 6.11. A street in Cairo

> The chief beauty of the women in this country is thought to be the smallness of their feet, which are bound up from infancy to prevent their increasing in size. The shoes of a Chinese lady are about 4 inches long, and 2 wide. Women of the lower order do not compress the feet.

While Mitchell's description objectifies Chinese women, he touches on the economic connection with foot binding. Poor women who performed physical labor could not participate in such a practice as it would hinder their ability to work. Goodrich's (1850, 148) characterization is less informative, "Small feet are so much desired by ladies that they keep them bandaged from childhood, and when they grow up they are hardly able to walk." This description works to exoticize and "other" Chinese women rather than deal with varying concepts of beauty and the economic impetus supporting such concepts. Smith constructs women in China as victims of their husbands and their culture. First, he tells us that these women are sold in marriage. Then, although they are "good looking" when they are young, they soon become ugly. At this point, Smith (1856, 277) objectifies Chinese women:

> A Chinese lady, to be considered beautiful, must have small eyes, protruding lips, straight black hair, and feet so small that she can scarcely walk. The last is regarded of the most importance, and the effect is produced by putting small shoes on the feet of children and never changing them till the feet have done growing.

Not only is his characterization degrading and superficial, it reveals his lack of understanding. While the other descriptions are equally derogatory, at least the authors superficially understood the process of foot binding. Monteith's (1868, 86) construction perpetuates "otherness," "The feet of the girls are prevented from growing by being

bound while young," answers the question, "What strange custom prevails in China?" The description in Monteith's (1874, 64) later book is no less demeaning, "The women of rank [are remarkable] for their **small, misshapen feet** (emphasis original)." Here, Monteith fails to tell the reader that the feet are "misshapen" intentionally, but he, like Mitchell, touches on the relationship between economic status and foot binding.

Although widow burning in India received much attention in the earlier set of geography schoolbooks, only Smith mentions it in the second set. As part of his description of Hinduism, Smith (1856, 270) declares, "Its spirit even prompts widows to burn themselves on the funeral piles of their husbands." This statement is followed by an explanation of English interaction (colonization) that led to abolishing the "abominable practice." He objectifies Indian women at the same time he justifies colonization. Despite intervention by the supposedly morally-just English, widow burning continued.

**Women's work**

Only two of the books published between 1832 through 1874 mention women's work. This lack of attention reveals the disregard for women's work by men despite the economic value and contribution of women to global economies. Usually, women's work is mentioned to boost the constructed image of the lucky middle-class white woman living in the United States. For example, Mitchell (1849, 294) describes women in Indo-China as "little better than slaves; they perform the principal part of the labour, and in Anam they conduct all the operations of buying and selling." He similarly describes women's work in South Africa, "The women cultivate the soil, build huts, cut wood, and make baskets of reeds that will hold milk (Mitchell 1849, 321)." While the recognition of women's work is surprising, it does more to bolster the construction of the fortunate

woman living in the United States than acknowledge women's contribution to local and global economies. Although there is no mention of women working in the United States, the nineteenth century reader knew otherwise. Unless they were from upper-middle-class families, nineteenth century students would surely witness women working. Even those in privileged households with servants witnessed women working in their own homes. While written representations fail to address women's work, the authors do include a number of visual images illustrating women working.

Further examples of working women include French women. Five of the geography schoolbooks include visual images of French women picking grapes similar to Olney's illustration (see Figure 6.12; Olney 1832, 176; Mitchell 1849, 245; Goodrich 1850, 113; Cornell 1854, 52; Monteith 1874, 61). From such exaggerated emphasis, the reader is led to believe that French women pick grapes and nothing else. Both Mitchell and Goodrich, however, recognize French women's economic contributions. Mitchell (1849, 246) states, "The women take an active share in all the affairs of life." Goodrich (1850, 110) declares, "Women work in the fields with the men; women also often keep the shops in the cities." French women, unlike those in South Africa or Indo-China, are not degraded for their efforts. The authors almost celebrate the equality of industriousness. Perhaps the congenial relationship between France and the United States at this time as well as the perception that French women were similar to women in the United States prevented the authors from constructing these women as slaves who were forced to work.

Figure 6.12. Gathering grapes

One woman of exceptional status is included by Goodrich. In his description of Great Britain, he discusses the popularity of Queen Victoria. Considering her influence on England and the United States, it is somewhat surprising that this is the only mention of her. Goodrich explicitly discusses the economic disparity in Great Britain in order to ensure that the reader recognizes their advantage and privilege of residing in the United States, and even includes two images on the same page to enhance the disparity. In Figure 6.13 we see a passive queen gazing off in the distance. She wears an elaborate gown and is adorned with her crown. While the image obviously depicts an idealized queen and not the real Queen Victoria, the contrast with the Irish women seems intentional. The Irish women are (re)presented as working women. Dressed in much less elaborate clothing, these women are making a business transaction. The seated woman has just sold something to the standing woman who is now handing over her payment. In regards to the queen, however, Goodrich (1850, 107) tells us that "She is said to be a very good Queen, and the people of England take great interest in every thing she does and says," and he goes on to describe the luxury of her "several splendid residences."

Working women in the United States are rendered invisible in the eight geography schoolbooks analyzed here. Even when three factory women from Massachusetts are granted a visual image in *Monteith's Manual of Geography*, the author, instead of discussing these working women, asks what city leads in cotton manufacturing (see Figure 6.14). Two women attend a loom while another carries away a basket of raw materials or, perhaps, finished fabric. No where does Monteith reveal the complexity of these women's daily lives or the stifling, controlling conditions of factory work during this time. Harriet Robinson, a Lowell Mill factory worker from 1834 to 1848, chronicled

Figure 6.13. Irish women and Queen Victoria

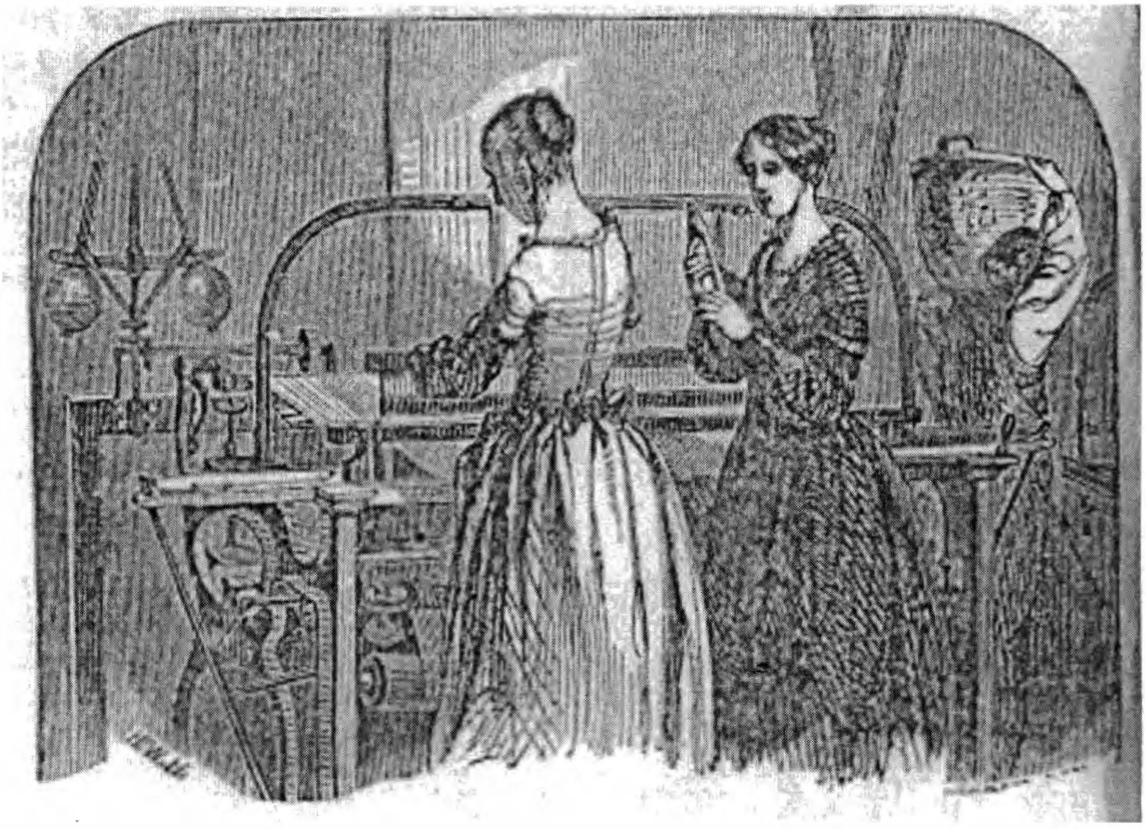

Figure 6.14. Interior of a cotton factory at Lowell

her experiences in the textile mills in her autobiography. Her account uncovers the daily experiences of these women highlighting their daily routines, family relationships, and resistance to intolerable working conditions. Unlike Monteith's account, Robinson portrays herself and other female factory workers as dynamic actors in their own lives. Monteith fails to address the poorly lit, inadequately ventilated working environment and he never informs the reader that these working women were sometimes as young as ten years old or that they averaged over twelve hours of work a day. Most of these women roomed in overcrowded boarding houses and, in return for their hard work, sent the money they earned home often to help pay for their brother's college education. Recognizing "real" women's work and contributions to global economies would have shattered the mythical notion of the fortunate housewife leisurely attending her family within the constructed national identity of the United States.

## Race

A nineteenth century doctrine of race, rigid classifications of seemingly immutable traits, continues to proliferate in the schoolbooks throughout the period under consideration here. Race is one of the most obvious modus operandi used to "other" various cultural groups living in the United States and elsewhere. In their attempts to define a homogeneous national identity, these authors construct climate as the cause of physiological difference, the effects of which determine morality. Classifying people according to skin color becomes even more prominent during this time period. Authors begin to include sections typically labeled "Races of Men" that include visual illustrations and descriptions of people emphasizing skin color. Beyond skin color, the authors also construct differences based on what they refer to as "customs" and

"manners," in order to accentuate their already established differences. The rhetoric of difference holds importance for these authors as they work to bolster the image of particular inhabitants of the United States at the same time they justify colonization and imperialism both at home and abroad.

**Effects of climate**

Six of the eight geography schoolbooks analyzed here reflect the common nineteenth century explanation that variations in physiognomy are the result of differences in climate. Furthermore, these differences are constructed to help justify colonialism, imperialism, and the civilizing missions of Christian organizations. Teresa Ploszajska (1999) demonstrated that English geography textbooks "othered" Australians (and various British colonial subjects) through interpretations of desirable versus undesirable climates. The climatic determinism addressed by Ploszajska is further accentuated in these schoolbooks with explanations of the torrid, temperate, and frigid zones.

In discussions of various zones determined by climate, Olney, Mitchell, and Smith address climate, fruit and vegetable production, animals, and people. Distinct differences are assigned to people living in the various zones with those in the temperate constructed as most desirable. "The inhabitants of the Torrid Zone are distinguished for the blackness of their skins, and for their feebleness, both of body and mind," states Olney (1832, 17). This construction contrasts strongly with that of the temperate zone. Mitchell (1849, 32) celebrates people living in the temperate zone, "Those of the north temperate Zone in particular have white or fair complexions, and generally more strength of body and mind than the inhabitants of the other Zones." He goes on to say these

people are distinguished for "industry, enterprise, and learning," and are "the most civilized and improved portion of mankind." Of course, people living in the frigid zone are constructed in a much less flattering manner by all of the authors. According to Smith (1856, 76), "They are of small stature, dark or black complexion, and possess little or no intelligence."

Goodrich's approach to variations in climate is different. Instead of explaining various zones, Goodrich addresses how countries differ. Like the other authors, he mentions climate, fruits and vegetables, animals, and people. Goodrich (1850, 30) asks, "In what respects are the people of different countries unlike each other?" His answer provides little information, "In some countries the people are white, in some yellow, and in some brown. In some the people are wild and savage, in some they are kind and gentle."

Von Steinwehr and Brinton approach climatic zones slightly differently. Instead of dwelling on complexion, they address behavior. Their characterizations, however, continue to be hierarchical. Apparel, or lack there of, becomes an issue for these authors, "But few people live in these [frigid] zones, and they must wrap themselves in thick furs to keep warm (Von Steinwehr and Brinton 1870, 15)." According to Von Steinwehr and Brinton (1870, 16), "In the torrid zone, it is so warm all the year, that many of the natives go almost naked—never needing clothing or fires to keep them warm." While these characterizations are seemingly innocuous, people in the temperate zone become the model for emulation or, at least, desirability, "the people of the temperate zones are stronger and more willing to work than those who live in hotter climates."

Monteith classifies climate, fruit and vegetable productions, animals, and people into various zones without ever naming the zones. According to Monteith, it is too cold in the frozen regions to cultivate the soil, so people have to hunt and fish. People living in the tropical regions are overtly degraded by Monteith (1874, 9), "In the hot or tropical regions the fruits and vegetables are so abundant the **agriculture is neglected**, and the climate is so warm that the inhabitants require little or no **clothing**; consequently, the manufactures in very hot countries are **not important**, and the people lack **energy** (emphasis original)." People who live in a climate similar to that of the United States are characterized as "active, industrious, and prosperous." Monteith ends his discussion of climate claiming "the occupations and conditions of a race" depend on which climate they live.

**Physiognomy**

People around the world, according to these authors, can be categorized into five distinct races. While we now know that there is only one species of human and that there is greater variation within one supposed racial category than there is across the constructed racial categories, these authors were working within the "scientific" context of the time. Racial hierarchies were commonplace and based on "scientific" evidence. Samuel Morton, a renowned Philadelphia physician, published *Crania Americana* in 1839, and Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species* was published in 1859. Both publications advanced already established racial hierarchies, considering the biological study of race dates back to the late seventeenth century (Finger 1994, 300). In these nineteenth century geography schoolbooks, five distinct races become fixed with written

descriptions and visual illustrations. While we witnessed a precursor with Adams' illustration from his 1827 geography schoolbook, the authors now provide distinct labels.

In his 1832 schoolbook, Olney does not yet refer to categories such as "Races of Men." Instead, he labels the five "grand varieties of the human species" as European, Asiatic or Mongolian, Malay, African, and American. Olney (1832, 258) says Europeans have "regular features and fair complexions" and include "Europeans, their descendants in America, Turks, Tartars, Arabians, Persians, Hindoos, Abyssinians, Egyptians, and Moors." "Asiatics" or "Mongolians" have a "brown, or olive complexion, having flat foreheads, small eyes, coarse, straight black hair, and wide mouths" and include "the Chinese, Japanese, Mongolians, Siberian tribes, Nova Zemblans, Laplanders, Greenlanders, and Esquimaux Indians," according to Olney (1832, 258). He assigns people of the Malay race "dark complexions, with large features, strong hair, broad nostrils, and great mouths" and says that they include "inhabitants of Malacca, the Asiatic islands, Australasia, and Polynesia (Olney 1832, 258)." The African race, according to Olney (1832, 258), includes "the Negroes of Africa" who have "jet black complexions, woolly hair, flat noses, prominent chins, and thick lips." The American race, Olney (1832, 258) says have a "copper color, coarse, straight black hair, high cheek bones, sunken eyes, and stout masculine limbs" and includes "all the Indians dispersed over the American continent, except the Esquimaux." Although Olney (1832, 258) describes supposedly distinct differences in appearance, he prefaces this entire section with, "they [the five races] imperceptibly approach and are lost in each other." He concludes this section by attributing these differences in complexion and external form to variations in

climate, and then says, "Difference of education, food, clothing, modes of life, and particular customs may be assigned as other causes (Olney 1932, 258)."

Mitchell's categories and descriptions echo Olney's, but Mitchell provides a visual image (see Figure 6.15). The viewer's attention is centered on the white European man who is the focal point. He is placed in the center of the picture, visually emphasized by the glances of the Asiatic, African, and American, and the directional lines of his arms and the Malay man's left arm that points upward to his face. Such visual clues impart a message of superiority and importance. Mitchell (1849, 41) emphasizes this message at the end of his section on the various races:

> The European or Caucasian race is the most noble of the five races of men. It excels all others in learning and the arts, and includes the most powerful nations of ancient and modern times. The most valuable institutions of society, and the most important and useful inventions have originated with the people of this race.

Furthermore, difference is accentuated here with the (re)presentation of apparel. While the distinction is superficial, nineteenth century students were, most likely, unfamiliar with such outfits. The costumes themselves are questionable representations, generalizing large and diverse cultural groups. Besides, the African man is shown here wearing a garment resembling a diaper suggesting the need for a parental-like relationship with the supposedly "civilized" white European. Perhaps any student of the nineteenth century who personally knew or, at least, witnessed an African American in the United States would recognize such an outfit as fiction. Mitchell clearly states the purpose of the visual image in his description of the European race, superiority. Mitchell (1849, 40) does, however, attribute such variation to "climate, food, and mode of life,

Figure 6.15. Asiatic, Malay, European, African, and American

and no doubt partly to causes which we do not understand."

Smith, like Mitchell and Olney, attributes racial variation to climate, food, dress, mode of living, and causes not well understood, and he goes on to describe features, colors, and locations of the five supposed races. A visual image is placed to the left of each description, to reinforce the representation for the student. Smith, unlike the other authors, does not overtly suggest European superiority. The only inference he makes here is by beginning with the European description, asking "What is the first race (Smith 1856, 78)?"

Von Steinwehr and Brinton include a visual representation of the five conjectural races and written descriptions. Both are somewhat different than the previous authors characterizations. These authors suggest that the students are familiar with two of the races, white and black. Von Steinwehr and Brinton (1870, 16) claim, "The **white** or **Caucasian** race is superior to all, and exceeds any other race in **power**" (emphasis original). Instead of describing physical attributes, these authors emphasize location. The "black race" or "Negroes" are primarily in Africa, but Von Steinwehr and Brinton (1870, 17) say, "The Negroes in our country are the descendants of slaves brought from Africa a long time ago." American Indians are characterized as the "red" race, and the authors attempt to explain why students may not be familiar with these people, "Once in a while you may now see an Indian in our towns and cities; but the white people have driven most of them so far away, that they seldom visit the settled parts of our country (Von Steinwehr and Brinton 1870, 17)." People in Asia are categorized as belonging to the "yellow" race, and Von Steinwehr and Brinton (1870, 17) are the first of these authors to acknowledge an Asian presence in the United States, "Not many of them come

to this country, though some Chinese and Japanese, who belong to this race, have lately been brought among us." The "brown" or "Malay" race is confined to Australia and islands in the Pacific and Indian oceans, according to the authors. The visual helps to emphasize the claim of white superiority (see Figure 6.16).

Like Mitchell's image, the focal point is the Caucasian representative. Placed symmetrically in the middle of the image, this figure also confronts our gaze. Confrontational eye lines draw our attention immediately and no matter where we look in the image, our eyes fall back to those staring back at us. The confrontational gaze also implies this figure is active rather than passive because it engages the viewer. In comparison, the four figures, literally marginalized in the image, are passive objects for our viewing. The four outer male figures intentionally placed, have stern expressions where the central female figure appears more amiable. The white female is more of an allegory than a real woman. Perhaps meant to represent a liberty figure, bountiful mother earth, or a nation in need of male protection, the juxtaposition of being surrounded by four non-white men suggests the latter. Moreover, in their written description of the various races, Von Steinwehr and Brinton never mention women, so the female image obviously denotes some further message.

Monteith, in his 1874 geography schoolbook, describes the five supposed races according to skin color and location. His characterizations mirror Olney's and Mitchell's without a specific reference to superiority, at least in this section of his book. Three of the books do not include a section categorizing the five supposed races. Goodrich includes a sentence describing the skin color of the five groups and intermittently includes a visual representation throughout the book. Instead of a separate section on the

Figure 6.16. Mongolian, Negro, Caucasian, Indian, and Malay

various races, he addresses race when discussing particular groups of people. Like Goodrich, Cornell mentions skin color, character traits, personality traits, and includes visual images when she addresses particular groups of people rather than limiting her discussion to a specific section. Monteith's 1868 geography schoolbook follows a similar format to Cornell's. Instead of a separate section with visuals addressing race, Monteith scatters his discussion of it throughout his book.

In addition to the "Races of Men" sections in these books, the authors characterize cultural groups in their descriptions of various countries and nations. Most often, people in Europe and the United States are described with personality traits such as robust, industrious, and enterprising, while non-white and non-Western cultural groups are described with physical attributes. By not describing particular cultural groups, we are led to believe they are like "us" and, therefore, need no description. On the other hand, in order to "other" and exoticize, the authors detail physiognomy to accentuate supposed differences between "us" and "them."

The people who live in Africa are repeatedly "othered" in these nineteenth century geography schoolbooks even though the authors frequently admit that Western knowledge of Africa is scanty. The authors make sure to tell the reader that Africa is *not* enlightened or civilized, and that it is the least important of the five grand divisions of the globe despite its historical significance (Olney 1832, 227; Mitchell 1849, 302; Goodrich 1850, 134; Smith 1856, 285; Monteith 1874, 67). Two southern African cultural groups receive, by far, the most attention: "Hottentots" and "Caffers." The connotations of these labels are quite derogatory, particularly "Caffer." While the spelling changes from author to author, and capitalized refers to Bantu-speaking South Africans, Mark Mathabane

(1986, xiii) explains, "In South Africa it is used disparagingly by most whites to refer to blacks. It is the equivalent of the term nigger." While these nineteenth century authors appear to use these labels innocuously, it is important to remember the power of language. Olney (1832, 241) claims:

> The Hottentots, generally speaking, are an ignorant, stupid, and filthy people. They build houses in a circular form, with the doors opening towards the center, and thus form a kind of court into which their cattle are collected at night to preserve them from the beasts of prey.

The inhabitants of "Caffraria" receive slightly less degrading treatment. Olney says they resemble the "Hottentots," but are more hardy and enterprising. While both descriptions are degrading, Olney contradicts himself in the former explanation. He says the "Hottentots" are ignorant and stupid, yet he describes an ingenious housing plan and even includes a visual image (see Figure 6.17). By building their homes in a circular fashion, the "Hottentots" have designed a plan which helps to protect their livestock in addition to protecting themselves. Because the entryways into each dwelling face inward toward one another, the housing design provides security from unwanted visitors. So, while Olney attempts to influence the reader to believe these people are somehow deficient, he also provides an example of their ingenuity.

Mitchell similarly attempts to degrade these two cultural groups, yet, like Olney, includes examples of their ingenuity. He provides a physical description of "Caffres" and describes the work of both the men and women. The men tend "large herds of cattle" while the women, among other things, make baskets to hold milk (Mitchell 1849, 321). Both examples emphasize skills, ingenuity, planning, and perseverance, characteristics

Figure 6.17. Hottentot village

not typically ascribed to natives of southern Africa. Mitchell's (1849, 322) description of the "Hottentots" is even more offensive than Olney's, "They are a quiet, inoffensive, ignorant race; filthy in their habits, and ugly in person: their language is singular, and has been compared to the clucking of turkeys." He goes on to say that they go almost naked and dwell in holes in the ground (different than the artfully designed homes described by Olney). Mitchell (1849, 322) does admit to a "display of some ingenuity" in their ability to disguise themselves as an ostrich in order to more easily hunt the animal. These two cultural groups are frequent objects of attention by these authors who repeatedly contradict themselves and one another, revealing a truly limited understanding or contempt of southern African peoples.

Goodrich (1850, 130) describes "Hottentots" as "ignorant and barbarous." He also say the climate is so warm there that "people can live with very little labor." This, in turn, makes them indolent and weak. The visual image Goodrich includes perhaps suggests indolence and weakness in the expression of the man pictured (see Figure 6.18). His eyes are diverted as to not confront the reader's gaze, he shrugs his shoulders in an air of almost hopelessness, and his closed body gesture with his arms crossed in front of him suggests a protective stance. Despite all of this, the reader must wonder why, if it is so hot here, does this man wear so many layers of clothing? Goodrich does say the "Hottentots" are adapting some of the customs of nearby English colonists, so the man pictured here wears Western clothing.

The "Hottentots" are described by Smith (1856, 299) as "filthy, ignorant, and degraded," some of whom go entirely naked. He exoticizes these people by telling the reader they eat "toads, lizards, and mice." Like Goodrich, he says some live in holes in

Figure 6.18. A Hottentot

the ground, yet, like Olney, he describes a circular housing design to protect cattle among the "less barbarous." Similarly, he describes "Caffrees" as resembling "Hottentots," but says that they are more civilized.

Von Steinwehr and Brinton describe southern Africa, in general, and do not mention any specific cultural groups. According to these authors, this region is inhabited by "ignorant, savage Negroes." Following this, Von Steinwehr and Brinton (1870, 81) acknowledge, "The interior of this vast region has been visited but rarely by white travelers; hence we do not know much about it."

Native Australians are the only other cultural group degraded as commonly as southern Africans. Adjectives describing Australians include rude, degraded, uncivilized, miserable, barbarous, and savage (Mitchell 1849, 332; Goodrich 1850, 155; Von Steinwehr and Brinton 1870, 83; Monteith 1874, 66). Smith's (1856, 312) construction succinctly captures the general description from these nineteenth century geography schoolbooks:

> The natives of Australia are small in stature, ill-shaped, and among the most degraded and barbarous portions of the whole human family. They are represented as going entirely naked, with their bodies besmeared with oil. They have no religion, no form of government, and none of the comforts of civilized life.

A visual image in Cornell's geography schoolbook suggests a similar construction, yet she fails to discuss Australians anywhere (see Figure 6.19). The figures in the foreground suggest a nuclear-type family with an adult male, adult female, and child. The man is (re)presented as a provider, dragging home his kill for the day. The female, constructed as a nurturing, care-giver, carries the child and respectfully follows the man. Unlike

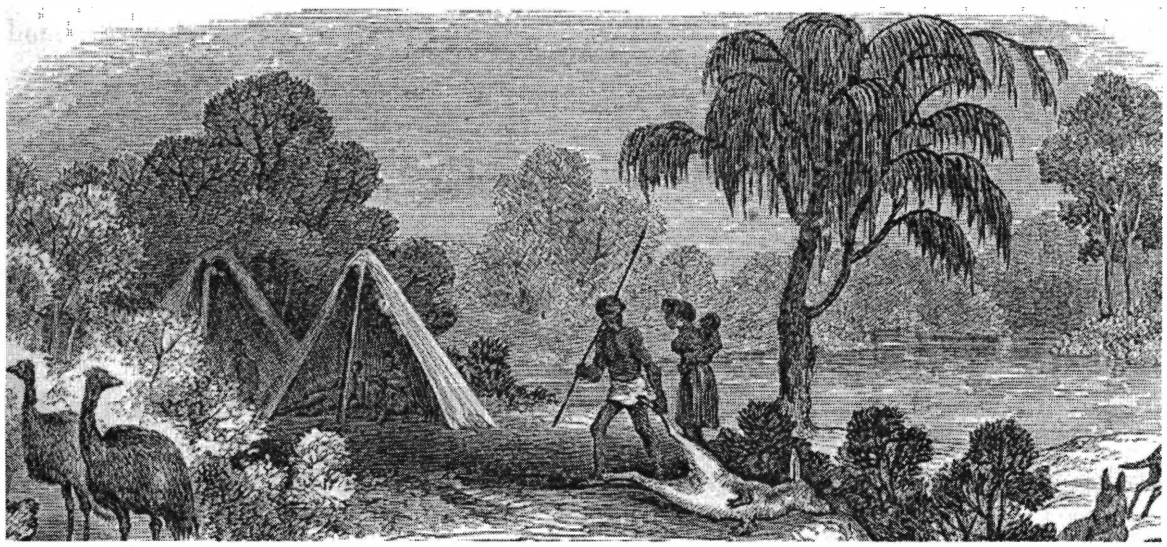

Figure 6.19. Life in Australia

Smith's description, these two figures are shown wearing clothes. Perhaps this is done to protect the eyes, mind, and morals of the nineteenth century reader, because in the tents in the background, are three nude figures; one male, one female, one undistinguishable. Placed in the background as they are, we can see they wear no clothes, yet we cannot distinguish any specific anatomy that may taint the virtue of a student from this time.

**Native Americans**

The myth of the "noble savage" continues in the schoolbooks throughout the time period analyzed here. American Indians are always included in descriptions of inhabitants of the United States, although they are considered foreigners in their own land as Mitchell (1849, 101) describes, "The Indians number about 300,000, but are not usually considered as forming a part of the population of the Union." Sometimes these descriptions include physical characteristics such as a copper complexion, but, more frequently, the authors emphasize character. For example, Olney (1832, 47) says they are "capable of enduring great fatigue, are faithful and generous to their friends, but cruel and implacable to their enemies." They are generally characterized as savages in need of civilizing upon Columbus' "discovery." In the various illustrations, Native Americans are shown with their arms raised, welcoming Columbus (see Figure 6.20). In Olney's visual image, one American Indian kneels as if praying for such an arrival and opportunity to be "civilized."

The reader is often told that whites gained possession of Indian lands through either purchase of force (Smith 1856, 105; Monteith 1868, 49; Von Steinwehr and Brinton 1870, 30), but, of course, forceful removal is justified by the inherent savage cruelty of the Indians. This supposed savageness is constantly present in

Figure 6.20. Discovery of America by Columbus in 1492

characterizations and, sometimes, visual illustrations. For example, Florida Seminoles are said by both Mitchell (1849, 148) and Smith (1856, 151) to be savages who attacked settlers, but were finally defeated and removed west. Settlers in various parts of the United States were forced to endure the cruel savagery of American Indians according to these authors. Mitchell confirms such events in Alabama, Indiana, and Missouri, while Goodrich, Smith, and Monteith address the New England states. Smith's (1856, 109) characterization exemplifies the authors' constructions, "The Indians proved a constant source of annoyance to the whites, whom they often captured, scalped, tormented, and killed in the most shocking and inhuman manner." Goodrich's visual image emphasizes such heinous acts (see Figure 6.21). Burning buildings are set on fire by a Native American figure raising a flaming torch in the middle of the crowd. While Native Americans are (re)presented attacking with guns, we see numerous depictions of scalping, and their primary victims are women and children. On the far right, a woman is kneeling with her arms restrained behind her; she is about to be clubbed over the head. The foremost figure is a woman holding an infant as another child runs along side. Their expressions are fearful as they attempt to run to safety. Just left of this female figure, an Indian raises a tomahawk while holding the hair on a man's head; this man is about to be scalped. Further to the left is a collapsed woman obviously defeated by the "savages." On the far left, a Native American runs away with a handful of hair, a visual image meant to reinforce the inherent savage cruelty of American Indians. Such representations, of course, justify removal, murder, and Christian conversion of American Indians.

Figure 6.21. Indians attack the Virginian settlements

All of the authors except Olney discuss Indian Territory which was set aside by the United States government (Mitchell 1849, 174; Goodrich 1850, 69; Cornell 1854, 99; Smith 1856, 175; Monteith 1868, 61; Von Steinwehr and Brinton 1870, 55). Mitchell (1849, 174) says, "Here the Indians are to be secured in governments of their own choice, subject only to such control of the United States as may be necessary to preserve peace between the several tribes." Because of their formerly savage state, the authors insist, American Indians need careful guidance and protection to progress toward civilization if they are to assimilate into the dominant culture of the United States. Such supervision is provided by the United States government:

> The emigrant tribes are progressing in civilization, and the enjoyment of the comforts of settled life. Their condition has been greatly improved by their removal hither; and it is to be hoped that they will never be disturbed in their present possessions. They receive annuities from the United States for the country which they left, and which they ceded to the government (Mitchell 1849, 175).

Despite their previously cruel treatment to settlers, the government is constructed by the authors as kind and generous. Mitchell includes a visual image to illustrate Native Americans acceptance of and, perhaps, amazement at civilization (see Figure 6.22). Here six Indians, placed in a wilderness setting, overlook a prosperous, growing city. They witness increased manufacturing, commerce, and transportation. For the nineteenth century reader, the right half of the image is desirable; it represents the idealized identity of the Untied States.

Figure 6.22. Indians viewing the improvements of white men

**Slavery**

Throughout the period analyzed here, the institution of slavery underwent many transformations, yet racism persists. Frequently, the authors fail to address blacks living in the United States in any depth whatsoever, or disregard them completely. When the authors do condemn slavery, they refer to it as primarily a southern phenomena. Four of the geography schoolbooks published prior to the Civil War include discussions of slavery in southern states, whereas the three books published afterward do not mention slavery in the United States. Mention of slavery in the West Indies is common as is the renowned slave revolt in Haiti. At the same time, the authors continue to blame Africans themselves for the practice of slavery. Toward the end of the period analyzed here, particularly following the Civil War, schoolbooks include descriptions of Liberia which further reflects the context of the time. Instead of addressing the hideousness of slavery, these authors restrict their discussions to West Africa. Von Steinwehr and Brinton (1870, 81) convey that blacks from the United States inhabit Liberia. Monteith (1868, 91) provides further detail about United States intervention when he explains that Liberia is "A Republic, established in 1820 by the United States, for negroes." He then tells the reader that the capital of Liberia, Monrovia, was named in honor of then president James Monroe.

Black separatism appeared to be a solution for increasing concerns about racial tensions. Fear of the increasing number of freed blacks, racial mixing, and the effects of slavery on both slave and master bolstered the push for a separate black nation. While the American Colonization Society encouraged free blacks to immigrate to West Africa, logistically and ideologically, resettlement failed to ease racial tension. Writing in 1835,

Alexis de Tocqueville (2000, 436) condemned black emigration, "The settlement of Liberia is founded upon a lofty and most fruitful idea; but whatever may be its results with regard to the Continent of Africa, it can afford no remedy to the New World."

When Olney discusses the inhabitants of the United States, he describes physical characteristics of American Indians but not whites or blacks. In doing so, Olney assumes the reader is familiar with blacks and whites but not Native Americans which, in turn, renders African Americans invisible. He superficially says, "The Negroes are descendants of African slaves (Olney 1832, 45)." Mitchell's (1849, 80) description is similar to Olney's, yet he manages to blame Africans themselves, "The Negroes are Africans and their descendants, who were purchased as slaves in their native country and brought hither from time to time." Monteith, in a topical review of North America, charts the various countries, their climate, products, inhabitants, language, and government. He lists "Americans" and "Indians" under the inhabitants section for the United States, rendering African Americans completely invisible (Monteith 1874, 19). Three pages later, however, he includes another, much smaller and less elaborate, chart with the population of the United States in 1870 that lists "white people" at 33,592,245, "colored" at 4,886,387, "Indians" at 383,712, and "Chinese" at 63,254 (Monteith 1874, 22). Finally, he acknowledges the large numbers of African American and Chinese in the United States at the same time he relegates them to the margins.

These authors frequently fail to include any mention of African Americans when they discuss the various productions of the southern United States. Because cotton production became so vital during this period and provided the economic foundations for prosperity in the United States (even if only for a few), it seems to follow that the people

actually doing the work would somehow be recognized. Quite the contrary, however, in geography schoolbooks published after the Civil War, Monteith, and Von Steinwehr and Brinton discuss cotton and the resulting prosperity, yet never mention slavery or African Americans. Visual illustrations provide more information than their discussions (see Figure 6.23). The title, "A Cotton-gin," reveals Von Steinwehr and Brinton's emphasis on technological innovation, yet here we see black men and women picking, hauling, and unloading cotton while a white man oversees the process. The two adult figures with already emptied baskets in the foreground appear to leisurely converse with one another, while two children, one black and one white, play with each other in a pile of cotton on the far right side of the picture. These representations suggest cotton picking is potentially easy, even enjoyable, and that both blacks and whites are at ease with race relations. In actuality, cotton picking is a tedious, laborious, strenuous, painstaking process made even worse by the social, economic, and racial hierarchy within the United States despite the reality that black and white children played together. Even if the visual is intended to represent post-Emancipation cotton production, the nineteenth century reader is well aware of the continuing racism despite the rhetoric of freedom. What they may not know is that the institution of share cropping, while under the guise of free labor, created a crop-lien system barely removed from slavery.

Prior to the Civil War, the geography schoolbooks present slavery as a southern institution. Olney, Mitchell, Goodrich, and Smith all address slavery within the confines of the southern United States. They, of course, distinguish between farmers who have few slaves or do the work themselves and the planters who own many slaves, implying the planters are too indolent for their own good, but they never overtly condemn the

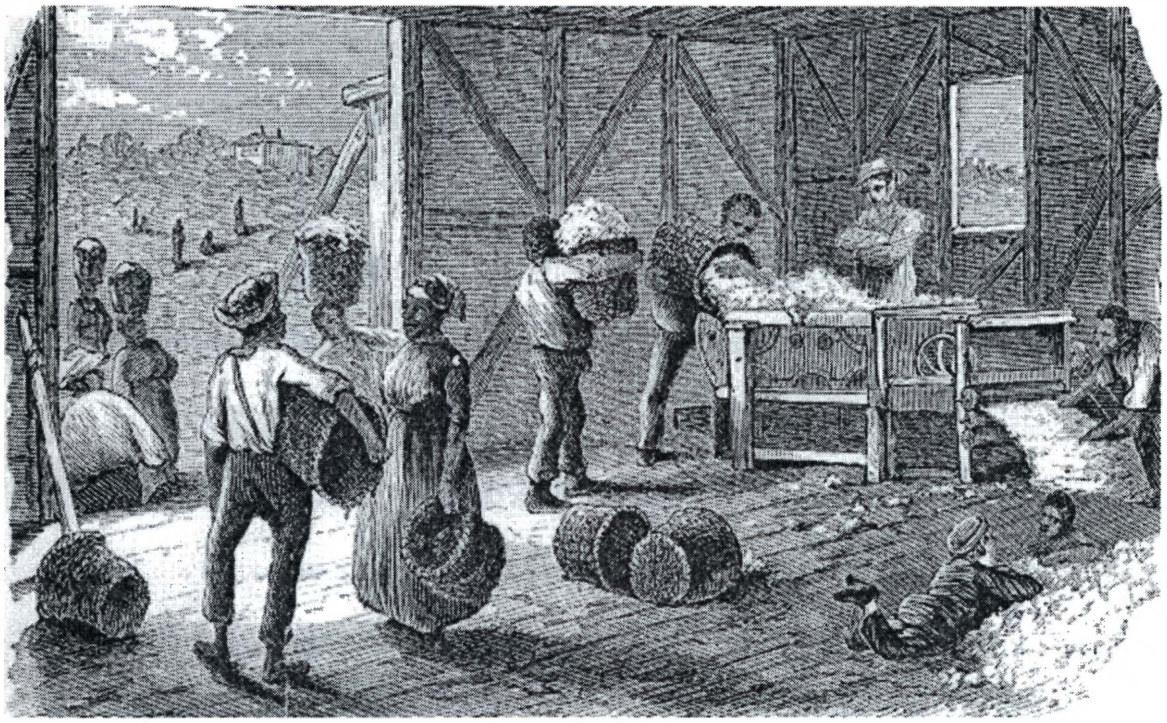

Figure 6.23. A cotton-gin

practice. Olney (1832, 92), after distinguishing between farmers and planters and higher and lower classes says, "The slaves perform most of the labor of the Southern States, and form nearly half the population." Mitchell (1849, 99) provides even less information, "Slave labour is chiefly employed in the southern and some of the western states." The description from Smith (1856, 133) is equally scanty, "The proprietors of the upland regions are chiefly farmers with smaller estates, and fewer slaves, than are possessed by the planters in the low country, and they frequently labor on their lands themselves." Goodrich (1850, 63), on the other hand, makes a connection, albeit slight, between slavery and cotton production, "These states produce a great deal of cotton, which is carried to distant places, and made into many kinds of cloth. The lands are chiefly cultivated by negro slaves, who form about one third part of the population." The visual image preceding Goodrich's description provides further information (see Figure 6.24). The plantation house is the backdrop for the cotton fields, where eight black men hoe the cotton. The man on the right exits a building and heads out to the fields to cultivate. A white overseer watches as the men hoe the fields. Missing from the visual are African American women who are typically shown picking cotton. Perhaps this suggests a division of labor between cultivation of the fields and the actual picking process, yet we know both men and women performed both tasks, and that poor white women and men also picked cotton. To include such information, however, would shatter the ideally constructed national identity of the United States.

The authors prefer to accentuate slavery in the French and English colonies of the West Indies. Mitchell (1849, 187), Goodrich (1850, 84), and Smith (1856, 192) all report that the majority of blacks in the West Indies are slaves. They also mention either the

Figure 6.24. Cultivating cotton on a plantation

1791 slave revolt in Haiti or that through acts of the British or French governments the former slaves were liberated. The former characterization constructs European nations as the perpetrators of slavery rather than the United States. While the latter provides an example of the potential problems arising from enslaved people and serves as a warning to the United States. While the authors continue to construct European nations, particularly Spain and Portugal, as perpetuating the slave trade, they also blame Africans themselves. Mitchell (1849, 304) claims:

> Africa has furnished slaves to Christian and other nations for hundreds of years; and the traffic, though somewhat checked, is still carried on. Great Britain and the United States were once engaged in this trade; but both nations have forbidden it; and it is punished as piracy by the latter power. The Spanish and Portuguese still pursue it on certain parts of the African coast.

When Mitchell claims the slave trade still exists on certain coasts, he means the west coast of Africa. Thirteen pages later, Mitchell provides a visual image to illustrate the practice (see Figure 6.25). There is no title to explain the picture, and one has to look closely to see black men being led off in chains. There are two clothed black men holding spears that appear to be selling the captives to two white men wearing hats. So, while Mitchell names European perpetrators, he really places blame on Africans in both his written description and the visual image.

Goodrich (1850, 130) also blames Africans for the slave trade:

> The people of this and some other parts of Africa go to war, and if they take prisoners, they sell them for slaves. Many thousands of Negroes have been taken from Africa, and sold in different countries. The slave trade is prohibited by most of the governments of Europe and America now; but some

Figure 6.25. The slave trade

> base and wicked men still send ships to Africa for slaves. These they sell in the West Indies, South America, and the southern parts of North America.

Here, Goodrich manages to blame people in Africa and Europe, while at the same time, reinforcing the idea that slavery is a southern institution. Again, the authors prefer to place blame for and emphasis on slavery anywhere but the United States.

Smith (1856, 286) includes intriguing information in his discussion of the African slave trade and manages to justify the practice based on the conditions in Africa:

> The interior of the country must be very populous, since within two centuries and a half, it has contributed 40 millions of vigorous men to the slave trade, and is yet anything but depopulated. Formerly, 105,000 slaves were annually introduced into the West Indies, besides vast numbers into other parts of the world. Ever since most of the Europeans and American nations have agreed to abolish this traffic, from 50 to 200 thousand Negroes are yearly torn from this wretched country and sold as slaves.

He reveals his limited knowledge of Africa by questioning the numbers of African people. Furthermore, he refers only to men and not women while we know both were sold into slavery. He also accentuates the West Indies and minimizes "other parts of the world" by not naming them, particularly the United States. He even suggests slavery may be preferred over life in Africa considering its "wretchedness."

The schoolbooks published from 1832 to 1874 condemn slavery less overtly than the textbooks from the first three decades of the nineteenth century. The changing status of slavery in the United States during this period certainly contributed to the authors' treatment, yet the stereotypes and generalizations found in the earlier books published between 1802 and 1827 continue. The schoolbook authors perpetuate racism as they treat

blacks living in the United States as marginalized victims of their native cultures, at the same time they deny or fail to recognize the prosperity of the country is the result of their labor.

# CHAPTER 7
# REDRAWING THE WORLD

The radical changes witnessed during the middle of the nineteenth century in the United States continued through the end of the century at a heightened pace. Expanding industrialization, intensifying urbanization, changing immigration, burgeoning national and international markets, along with mass production and the rapid deployment of resources compounded a host of new social problems. Such a rapidly changing world was hardly imaginable a few decades earlier. The new social and political order responded to the new developments with a variety of reforms, including educational reforms. The emphasis on individual redemption and moral renewal found in common schools shifted to preparation for the new urban-industrial order with progressive education. The increased activity and various committee reforms of the National Education Association during the 1890s reveal the interest in connecting public education to business interests and commercial enterprise. Public education, again, became a panacea to ameliorate perceived social ills such as destitute immigrants, labor unrest, and economic depression. The socially constructed national identity of the United States during the last two decades of the nineteenth century shifts to a more international representation at the same time this construction continues to marginalize non-white, non-middle class, non-Protestant people at both home and abroad.

The five geography schoolbooks published from 1882 to 1897 analyzed in this chapter include *Colton's New Introductory Geography* (1882) by Joseph Hutchins Colton, *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* (1883), *Our World; or, First Lessons in Geography* (1885) by Mary Lucy Hall, *Elements of Geography* (1894) by Alexis Everett

Frye, and *Natural Elementary Geography* (1897) by Jacques W. Redway and Russell Hinman. While these authors, for the most part, continue to "other" marginalize groups in the United States and elsewhere, they are less environmentally deterministic overall than the previous authors and include slightly more detailed descriptions of people and their work. During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, geography continued to be a mainstay of the curriculum in both elementary and secondary schools. The Committee of Ten (1893) and the Committee of Fifteen (1895) upheld geography as a means to enhance students' analytical skills and alliance to the nation (Kliebard 1986, 17; Schulten 2001, 103). Both committees were commissioned by the National Education Association (NEA), then an elitist organization composed of white men in "high standing" (Tyack and Hansot 1982, 136). With membership including such influential figures as Charles Eliot and William Torrey Harris, the NEA worked to establish uniformity in public school systems with the hopes of alleviating threats to national stability. Eighty-two of the largest cities in 1890 reported the amount of time students in their elementary schools spent on various subjects. Out of the total seven-thousand hours, students spent five-hundred hours on geography, ranking it fourth out of nine subjects (Tyack 1974, 47). The time devoted to studying geography documents its prominent role in the curriculum.

## Approach

By the 1880s, geography had long been significant in the curriculum. Instead of insisting on the importance of studying geography as the authors in the first three decades of the nineteenth century did, these authors express the usefulness of their respective textbooks to help young students learn geography. Suggesting that the study of

geography is often distasteful to young pupils, the authors offer simplified maps and suggest moving from a study of local, familiar places to distant, unfamiliar locations as remedies. *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* (1883, iii) advances home geography, "All educators now agree that the elements of Geography should be learned from a study of the locality in which the pupil lives." Mary Lucy Hall (1885, 3) reverts back to the argument that most geography schoolbooks are not well-suited for young learners but that she has greater humanistic intentions for the student using her textbook, "I have endeavored to teach localities . . . to inspire sympathy with far-off nations, and to create a desire to learn more."

Geography schoolbooks published in the 1890s are similar in approach, emphasizing home geography and simplified maps, but provide a distinct definition of geography. Alexis Everett Frye (1894, ii) states, "The central thought is *Man in his relations to the earth* (emphasis original)." Jacques W. Redway and Russell Hinman (1897, 3) similarly claim their schoolbook, "recognizes the fact that geography for schools should be a practical study of man's physical surroundings *in their relations to him* (emphasis original)." The reciprocal relationship between "man" and his surroundings triggers greater emphasis on commerce and industry. Susan Schulten (2001, 109-110) argues that geography schoolbook authors accentuate commercial enterprises to a greater degree at the end of the nineteenth century than they did previously. Frye (1894, ii) singles out commerce with a separate heading in the preface of his book to explain, "These [*products and related industries leading to commerce*] are treated in their relations to climate and natural features. More stress than usual is laid on this subject, because of its influence on national life (emphasis original)."

Correspondingly, Redway and Hinman (1897, 3) state, "Hence the central idea of the treatment is *man*,--his history, customs, industries, and commercial interrelations as determined or modified by the inorganic forces of nature (emphasis original)." While commercial emphasis is remarkably overt in geography schoolbooks published in the last decade of the nineteenth century, productive endeavors, whether industrial or agricultural, have seemingly always taken precedence over social and cultural aspects of human life in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks.

## Teaching methodology

Geography schoolbooks published in the last two decades of the nineteenth century are more narrative in style than the preceding textbooks. Colton's geography begins with a narrative then switches to factual statements followed by lists of questions. The narrative is meant "to impart to the pupil the simple elementary ideas necessary to a clear comprehension of the more formal and concise statements of the text (Colton 1882, n.p.)." *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* is the only book analyzed in this chapter that maintains the catechismal style of previous schoolbooks; lists of questions follow groups of factual statements. Hall, Frye, and Redway and Hinman organized their respective geography textbooks in a narrative fashion. Their geographies place less emphasis on questions, although questions remain. Frye (1894, 43) even includes various human companions to accompany the reader through their journey.

The authors, like their predecessors, work to normalize social constructions of geography, boundaries, countries, nations, and people. By relying on the "science" of nature, they diminish the social, cultural, and even economic aspects of daily life. Frye (1894, ii) states, "This book holds the *earth as a unit* before the mind (emphasis

original)." Here, nature with its physical surroundings supercedes human activities. Redway and Hinman admittedly recognize the active function people play in geography, yet they perpetuate the normalization and naturalization of socially constructed divisions. They claim their schoolbook "recognizes the fact that one of the most important functions of elementary geography is to teach the names, locations, and characteristics of the *countries* into which man has divided the earth. These are the units of the world's geographical intercourse (Redway and Hinman 1897, 3; emphasis original)." Despite the environmentally deterministic interpretation of human agency, these authors, particularly Frye and Redway and Hinman, provide many more examples of daily life than authors from previous decades.

The three geography schoolbooks published in the 1880s include visual representations made from metal engravings rendered from artists' drawings. Visually detailed, these images convey a reality to enhance the written text. Visual images in the geography schoolbooks published in the 1890s were engraved from photographs. While previous visual images disclosed a specific reality, photographs suggest an even more "objective" demonstrable existence. The authors explicitly state that the images were taken from photographs. Frye (1894, ii) claims the pictures "*are true to nature* (emphasis original)." Redway and Hinman (1897, 4) maintain that their pictures enhance the written text, and that the visual images "are of simple subjects within the comprehension of young pupils." Mediated by the photographer, photographed, and audience, photographs are no less interpretive than representations in a variety of media. So-called "simple" visuals portraying supposedly "characteristic" subjects (arguably objects) work to further normalize social constructions of race, gender, and class roles. Such

standardization perpetuates a single view of the world through which the powerful in the United States maintain hegemonic control.

## Socio-economic class

Privilege is disguised as something inherent to particular groups of people in these late nineteenth century geography schoolbooks. Concealed as the ingenious, adventurous, benevolent caretakers of the world, the United States, its privileged citizens, and their western European counterparts credited themselves for their prosperity. The authors of geography schoolbooks published in the 1880s and 1890s perpetuate socio-economic class privilege through environmental determinism (sometimes divinely ordered) the level of industrial and agricultural production, trade, and the "character" of people. Celebrating the United States and its western European counterparts confirms the authors' constructions of Western superiority and homogeneity at the expense of women, the working-class, non-Protestants, and people of color at home and abroad.

### Celebrating the United States

Extolling the glories of the United States continues in geography schoolbooks published in the 1880s and 1890s. Colton (1882, 29) claims, "The United States occupy the most important part of North America." Moreover, the people in the United States are intelligent, enterprising, and well-educated, particularly in the northeast, middle Atlantic, and central states. Similarly celebratory, *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* (1883, 16) boasts, "Our country is the greatest republic in the world." Hall (1885, 96), like Colton, eulogizes North America, "Beside being our home, it is one of the largest and finest of the continents." Frye (1894, 164), concluding his book, emphasizes size and wealth, "The United States is the largest republic and the richest nation in the world."

Earlier in a discussion of "people," Frye (1894, 49) refers to the United States (he says America) as "the dearest land of all." Redway and Hinman (1897, 33) provide an explanation for their claim that the United States is the most flourishing part of North America:

> It has more people and greater wealth than all the other countries of the continent together. This is partly because of the character of the people who settled in the United States, and partly because of the favorable position of the country.

While the authors glorify the United States, they fail to explain that the wealth and sizable land mass is the result of colonization, slave labor, and genocide. Emphasizing the importance of commerce, industry, agriculture, and expansion, the authors, rarely, if ever, mention the people actually performing the labor. Nor do they address the legislated dislocation experienced by Native Americans, Hispanics, and Latinos. Instead, the authors rely on environmental determinism and the "character" of western European settlers and their descendants.

**Regional bias**

These authors divide the United States into regions, varying from four to nine. As in the previously published geography schoolbooks, the authors continue to construct the southern states in a less than flattering manner. In comparison to the northern states, the authors characterize people in the South as less educated and industry and manufacturing are less advanced.

Colton divides the United States into five regions: New England, middle Atlantic, South, Central, and West. People in all regions except the South and West are enterprising, intelligent, and well-educated. Because the western states are still being

settled or recently established, the reader might not expect formal education systems to yet be diffused. Colton mentions schools established for the recently freed slaves, but, otherwise, there is no discussion of common schools in the South or of people other than blacks. Visual illustrations accompanying Colton's text reinforce the written messages. The illustration of the middle Atlantic states includes foundries, mills, and canals (see Figure 7.1). The emphasis on iron forging suggests the enterprising spirit of the people as they manipulate material resources to further manufacturing, industry, and commerce. "A Western Settlement" shows four men actively conquering the landscape as they expand the empire of the United States (see Figure 7.2). Two seated women attend to the seemingly lesser active pursuits of child-rearing and cloth mending. The illustration accompanying the description of the southern states is reminiscent of scenes from earlier geography schoolbooks depicting slaves picking cotton (see Figure 7.3). Here, three black men and one black woman cut sugar cane; two black women gather stalks as two black men load a wagon. The sleeping man, apparently overseeing the work, holds a whip. Small shacks in the background on the right are presumably housing for the workers, and the building for processing the sugar cane pales in comparison to the massive manufacturers elsewhere in the United States. The South appears trapped in an archaic period of manual labor, even slave labor, where innovation is limited to a solitary steamboat in the distance. *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* and Hall's geography schoolbook contain similar characterizations even though they divide the regions somewhat differently.

The geography schoolbooks published in the 1890s give more attention to the diversity of labor throughout the United States and include the burgeoning industry in the

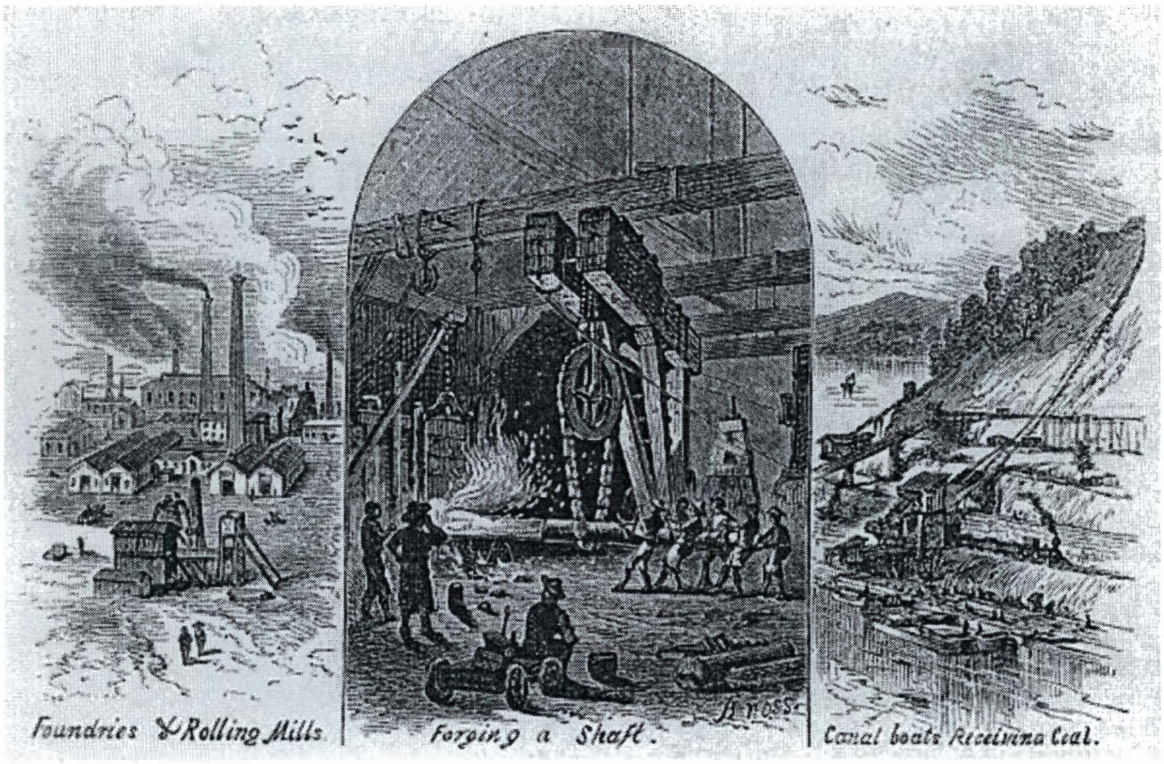


Figure 7.1. Middle Atlantic states

Figure 7.2. A western settlement

Figure 7.3. Harvesting the sugar-cane

South and West. Agriculture and manual labor are not restricted to the fields of the South and industrial emphasis supercedes the prior emphasis on education. While images of previously enslaved laborers continue to illustrate these schoolbooks, the authors recognize the South for its additional enterprises.

**European models**

Western Europe, although still held in high regard, does not receive the same ingratiating response as in the geography schoolbooks published prior to the 1880s. The authors continue to maintain Western European superiority over much of the world, but they emphasize the connection between the United States and Great Britain less than in previous textbooks.

The "industry, intelligence, and enterprise" of Europeans helps Colton (1882, 63) explain the prosperity of Europe. Great Britain, England in particular, is described by Colton (1882, 64) as surpassing all other nations in commerce and manufacturing, and is noted for "Its foreign possessions [that] extend into every quarter of the globe." In the very next sentence, he says England has great wealth, yet he never addresses the relationship between this wealth and the aforementioned "foreign possessions." Of course Great Britain has great wealth from extracting resources and exploiting people in its so-called possessions. Great Britain receives similar treatment in *The Eclectic Elementary Geography*.

Hall addresses the relationship between the United States and England. She draws the connection, emphasizing language and ancestry:

> Indeed, you hear of them [English people] more frequently than any other country or people: and it would be strange if it were not so; for the

> Americans speak their language, and the great-great-grandfathers of many of us were Englishmen, who came over here and settled in America long ago (Hall 1885, 36).

Hall "others" all non-English descendants living in the United States further normalizing English ancestry. In the paragraph following the quote above, Hall conveys the enterprising spirit of the English as she compliments their imperialistic projects.

Frye (1894, 93) also connects Europe to the United States through ancestry, but with emphasis on race instead of language, "The white settlers in America came from Europe and of course belong to the same great family." Like Hall, Frye stigmatizes anyone who does not fit into this category. While Frye typically addresses the physical geography of Europe and its natural resources, the British Isles, for Frye and the other authors, reign supreme. Once again, the imperialist project of ranking various places and people around the world makes the British Isles "the most important islands on the earth (Frye 1894, 97)."

Redway and Hinman, like Frye, reconcile the relationship between Europe and the United States through ancestry, particularly race. The authors claim students should be interested in this part of the world because "It is our old home! (Redway and Hinman 1897, 12)" Redway and Hinman (1897, 12) reinforce the connection by stating, "For many years ago all the white people of the world lived in Europe, southwestern Asia, and northern Africa." Again, the authors deem any non-white, non-European student, reading this book, invisible, and they figuratively ostracize them from the United States. Redway and Hinman continue to stigmatize non-white, non-European people throughout their book. In their introduction to Europe, Redway and Hinman (1897, 86) claim:

> The Europeans are civilized white people, and are the ancestors of most of the people in America. Their occupations, habits, and needs are much like ours, and the greater part of our trade is with them.

The so-called "civilized" status of Europeans is just one more method used to "other" those excluded from such a rank and, at the same time, further normalize white, Protestant, middle-class constructions as the standard for comparison.

**Constructions of cultural development**

Geography schoolbooks published in the 1880s continue to have sections titled "Manner of Living." Here, the authors perpetuate a constructed hierarchy in order to neatly divide the world. The spectrum of this supposed development ranges from savage to enlightened.

The power of these categories induced Colton to comprise two different sections of his book in order to explain and reinforce the constructions. He deems Native Americans savage or barbarous, "the lowest condition in which mankind are found (Colton 1882, 16)." According to Colton (1882, 16), "their chief occupation is war and their customs and religion are often degrading and cruel." The visual image accompanying the text reinforces Colton's message (see Figure 7.4). The half nude (a symbol of savagery in these books) Native Americans in the foreground are about to attack the two peaceful white men in the background. The visual reinforces the cruel savagery of American Indians which, in turn, justifies the cruel treatment of Native Americans by the white settlers. Civilized people, according to Colton, are white people in the United States and England. The "civilized" abide by laws they have created, live in "proper" dwellings, educate their children, convey information through print media,

Figure 7.4. Savage life

and are technologically advanced. The image titled "Civilized Life" shows a woman accompanied by three children (see Figure 7.5). They overlook the progress achievable only to the "civilized." Here the advantages of the United States are made obvious. The bustling city life, filled with manufacturers, industry, and commerce, is escapable in the veritable "land of plenty." A brief holiday in an idyllic rural setting prevents city dwellers from partaking in vices common in such environments. Not that the authors ever address the realities of industry in these geography schoolbooks, they were quite aware of the desires of educational authorities to use education as a cure for societies ills in the nineteenth century.

Colton also includes five categories and provides a scanty definition for each. People assigned to savagery (American Indians and, sometimes, "Ethiopians" for example) are hunters and gatherers who live in caves or huts. The barbarous category includes people, sometimes "Ethiopians," who tend livestock, but do not yet till the land. According to Colton (1882, 13), the half-civilized nations (or "Malays" in southeastern Asia) "have made some progress in agriculture and the mechanic arts, build houses, and live in cities and towns." Cultural and ethnic groups deemed civil, such as the inhabitants of eastern and central Asia, foster arts and sciences, live in more urban locations, and have organized governments. The enlightened category includes "Caucasians" who are the most civilized according to Colton. He juxtaposes savagery and civility in a visual image (see Figure 7.6). The reader can assume that the scenes take place in the United States. American Indians hunt and canoe while the "Caucasians" farm and enjoy a leisurely sleigh ride. The water scenes contrast a canoe and a steamboat suggesting the ingenious capabilities and engineering feats of the white settlers. Divinely rewarded for

Figure 7.5. Civilized life

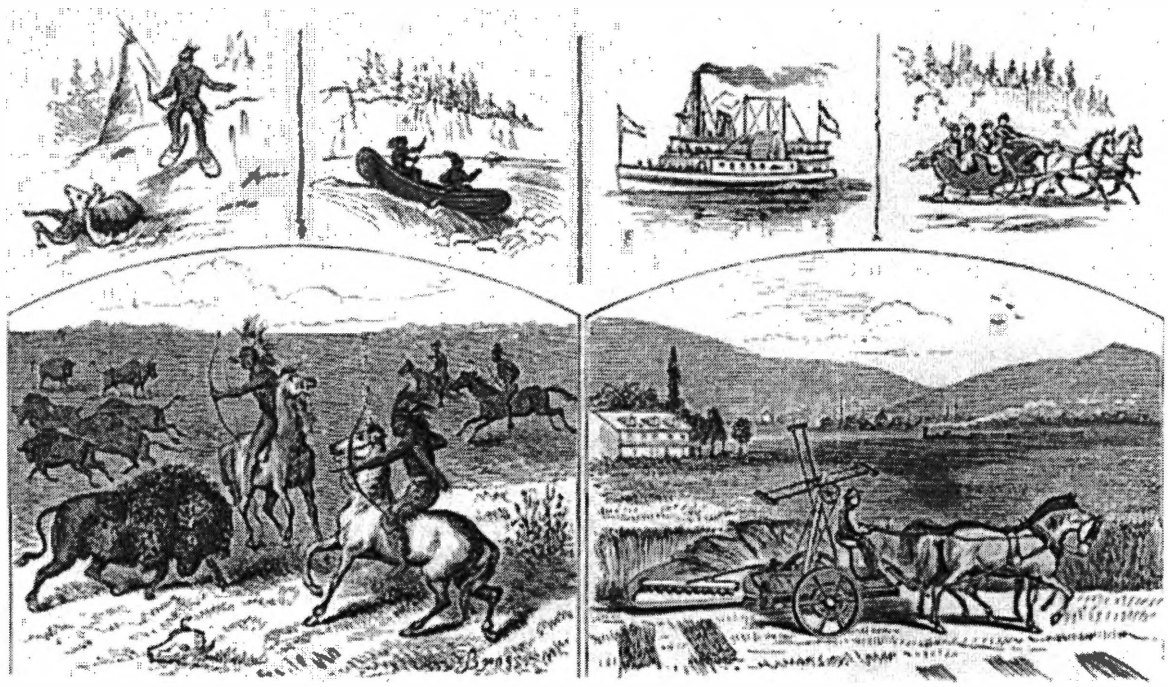

Figure 7.6. Savage life/civilized life

their hard work, the "civilized" inhabitants are able to relax and enjoy their leisure time. The Native Americans, on the other hand, have no such luxury. As the visual shows, they must constantly strive for their daily needs. If they would only assume the life style of their conquerors, they too would be able to enjoy the benefits of "civilization."

Only three categories are included in *The Eclectic Elementary Geography*, and there is a visual accompanying each description. "Civilized" people here live in homes, read books, attend school, and have railroads and steamboats. Again, these people include the white race in the United States and Europe. The visual image portrays a congested waterway and a smoke filled sky (see Figure 7.7). Here the reader can witness the progress of civilization: steamboats, locomotives, industry, even a suspension bridge. People with no railroads or steamboats and few books are "half-civilized," and live primarily in Asia. While the visual image supports the written text, the reader would perhaps question the difference between the "civilized" and "half-civilized" scenes (see Figure 7.8). The architecture is different, but no less of an engineering feat. The bustling coastline includes people performing daily tasks. The boats are different in design, yet are capable of performing similar tasks, and, at the same time, wasting less natural resources. "Uncivilized" or "savage" people (natives of Africa, Australia, and the United States) hunt and fish, do not read or write, and live in crude dwellings, if any. The accompanying illustration is suspect (see Figure 7.9). Teepees fill a barren landscape. Five figures wrapped in heavy clothing surround a fire in the left middle-ground where hides hang to cure. Two figures in the right foreground also wear heavy clothing and carry goods on their backs. The figure just left of center makes the representation questionable. In this apparently cold scene as suggested by the numerous heavily cloaked

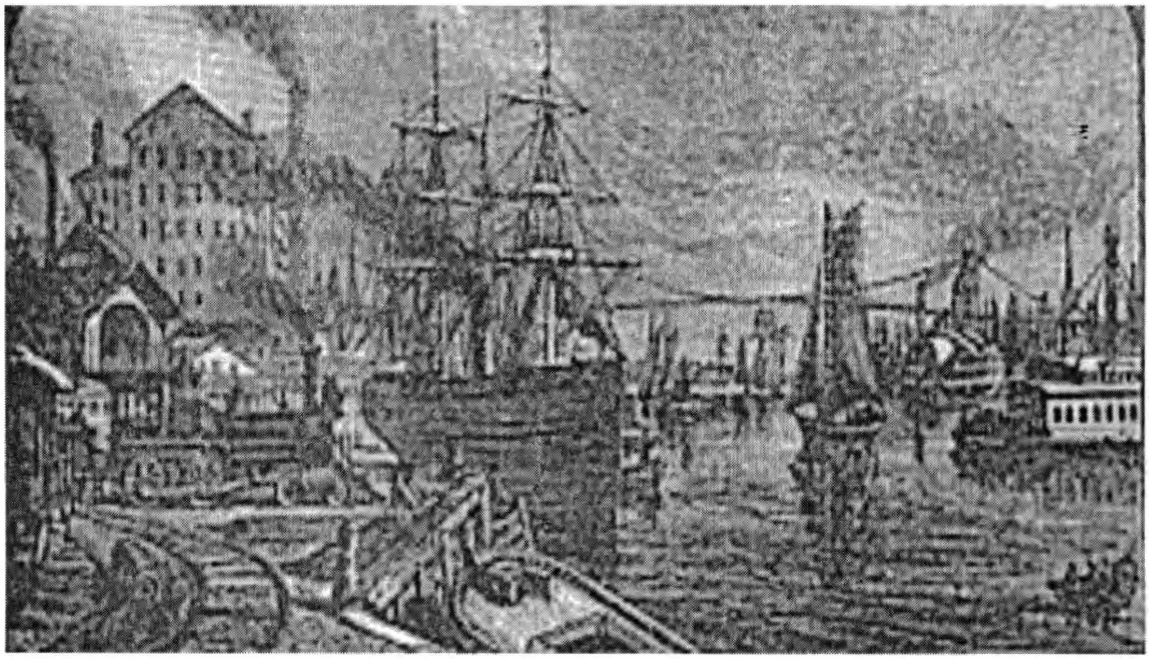

Figure 7.7. A scene among civilized people

Figure 7.8. A scene among half-civilized people

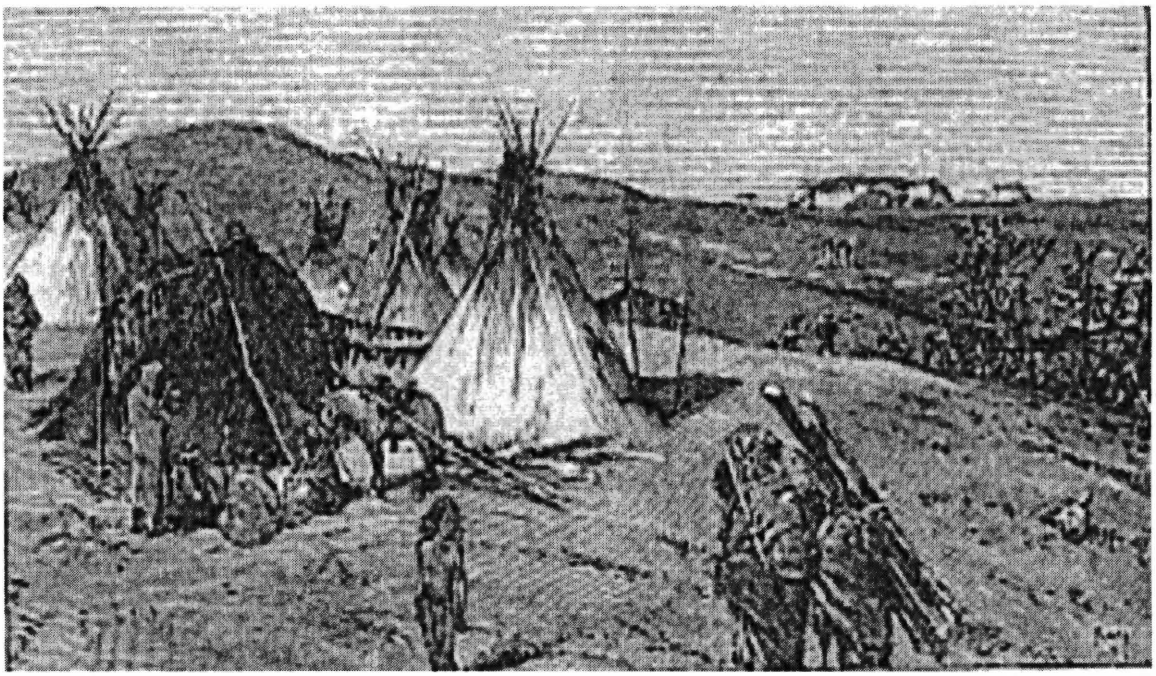

Figure 7.9. A scene among uncivilized people

figures, an almost nude figure stands as if observing the viewer. Even if this particular tribe wears loin cloths in warmer weather, this figure is deliberately depicted half nude and placed as the focal point of the picture to reinforce the supposed "savage" state of Native Americans.

Hall describes the ability to progress through these assigned states of living. She explains progress as a matter of learning, and "some have learned much more than others (Hall 1885, 59)." Books, churches, schools, factories, music, pictures, food, clothes, and houses relay the states of progress for Hall (1885, 59):

> All this learning is called *civilization*, and such people are said to be *civilized*; but, if they know nothing of all these things, they are *savage* or *barbarous* (emphasis original).

For the authors, the potential to achieve "civilization" is there if the so-called savages would only adopt such a manner of living.

Geography schoolbooks published in the 1890s maintain the hierarchical spectrum of cultural development, but in a slightly different way. These authors determine civilization by one cultural groups' ability to conquer another's. Progress, in this regard, is the development from tribal cultures to nations. For example, Frye explains how tribes in Europe fought over land and the leader of the conquering tribe would rule over all. Once various tribes began to trade with each other, learning became a reciprocal inevitability. According to Frye (1894, 53), "When people found out how to print books from type they soon became much wiser. Now, of course, they have fine schools, beautiful houses and railroads." The constructed hierarchy of nations and races continues albeit slightly differently.

Redway and Hinman, like Frye, use Europe as *the* example of progression from savage to civilized. The authors maintain, "Thousands of years ago the white people of Europe were themselves savages (Redway and Hinman 1897, 92)." According to Redway and Hinman, civilization spread through the conquering nations. Rome conquered Greece, the first civilized, which, in turn, became the most civilized nation in Europe. Civilization transferred from nation to nation as empires expanded. Redway and Hinman's (1897, 92) ludicrous claims justify plundering, "But they [Scandinavians] learned peaceful ways from the people whom they robbed." Turkey, however, eluded the civilizing process according to the authors, "Turkey is hardly counted among the civilized nations of Europe even to-day (Redway and Hinman 1897, 92)." Frye and Redway and Hinman use Europe as their example of the progressive spectrum of civilization, their arguments justify the colonization of supposedly lesser civilized people.

Redway and Hinman's hierarchical progression may help disguise socio-economic class status and privilege in the United States while, at the same time, accentuating class divisions in India. The authors claim:

> The women of the lower classes work in the fields, the mother with her baby on her back or astride of her hip. Many of the women of the upper castes are kept hidden in the inner rooms of the houses (Redway and Hinman 1897, 119).

Redway and Hinman never mention poor white women working in the fields in the United States or that physical labor was deemed inappropriate for wealthy white women in the United States, thus further justifying colonization of India by England.

## Religion

Religion plays a less prominent role in geography schoolbooks published in the 1880s and 1890s than in earlier books, yet it continues to reinforce the authors' constructions of non-Christians, particularly non-Protestants, as "others." There are fewer overt statements condemning non-Christians in comparison to previously published schoolbooks, but a divine Christian order persists.

### Protestantism

The prevailing religion in the United States remains Protestantism, but the authors' Protestant fervor is toned down in these later schoolbooks. None of the authors address Protestantism in the United States, but a few briefly discuss Mormonism, highlighting Mormonism's "othered" positioning. Because Mormonism is perceived as outside the standardized norm of religion in the United States, it receives special attention. Hall, Frye, and Redway and Hinman all explain that the Mormons live in Utah. Redway and Hinman (1897, 61) inform the reader that the Mormons "were driven from the settlements east of the Mississippi." Hall (1885, 113) stigmatizes Mormons when she says:

> They have a religion and customs of their own, very different from those of other parts of our Union; and some people do not like to have this great Mormon settlement in the Territory of Utah.

Protestantism, although never directly addressed by these authors, continues to be used to construct a homogeneous national identity of the United States.

**Anti-Catholic attitudes**

Colton is the only author from this selection of geography schoolbooks who never mentions Catholicism. *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* (1883, 68) as well as the geographies authored by Frye (1894, 151) and Redway and Hinman (1897, 104) state that Rome is the home of the Pope. While the authors avoid any in depth discussion of Catholicism, they insinuate it is a less desirable religion because Italy is no longer the powerful empire it was in ancient times. Redway and Hinman, however, are careful to include a short discussion about Italian immigrants in the United States. "Thrifty and industrious laborers," Italian immigrants are "nearly all of our street organ-grinders (Redway and Hinman 1897, 104)." The authors also claim that these same people run many of the fruit stands in large cities. Any mention of immigrants in the United States is almost non-existent in previously published geography schoolbooks.

Hall and Redway and Hinman also address Catholicism in their discussions of South America. Redway and Hinman (1897, 78) contend that numerous Catholic priests, who arrived with the Spanish and Portuguese, established schools and missions for the native Indians. Hall says most of the people in South America are Catholic and describes religious festivals and processions. She goes into detail relating the various orders of priests and their regalia. Hall (1885, 94) includes a brief statement about nuns, "There are large houses in most of the cities, called *convents*, where women go to be nuns (emphasis original)."

**Idolaters, pagans, and heathens**

Discussions of pagans, the label most commonly used by this group of authors, have decreased and are less pernicious than in geography schoolbooks published earlier

in the nineteenth century. Paganism is defined in *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* (1883, 16) as a religion "whose followers worship idols and pray to them for help and protection." Colton (1882, 16), while describing "savage" states, says, "They know nothing of the works of God," whereas "civilized" people have churches. Hall (1885, 30) defines pagans as those "who worship the sun, moon, and gods of their own, made of wood or stone." While such descriptions are derogatory, they are less so than earlier nineteenth century characterizations.

Colton and Hall mention the work of missionaries in the Sandwich Islands. These characterizations are reminiscent of descriptions from the geography schoolbooks analyzed in chapter five. Hall (1885, 37) writes, "Missionaries went there years ago to teach the natives, who have now become quite civilized." While Hall credits the missionaries, Colton (1882, 81) is more ingratiating with his praise:

> These islands were formerly inhabited by warlike savages, many of whom were cannibals; but by the efforts of missionaries from Great Britain and the United States, they have, in great measure, been converted to Christianity.

Although the 1882 edition of Colton's book is "new and improved," this section was left unrevised from an earlier edition. It seems out of place with the other geography schoolbooks published in the 1880s and 1890s, and is similar to the schoolbooks published earlier.

Asia continues to be somewhat problematic for these late nineteenth century authors, although less so than it was for their previous counterparts. Because Jesus Christ lived and died in Asia, the authors tend to question the lack of Christianity there. Frye makes no mention of it whatsoever. A brief statement that Jesus lived and died here is

included in *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* and the geography schoolbooks by Colton and Redway and Hinman, but Hall devotes a half page of text to it. Despite the efforts of Christian missionaries, numerous pagans continue to inhabit the land. Hall (1885, 30) remarks:

> But what seems rather strange is, that in the part of the world where we find the most pagans is the country where Christ was born, and where most of the things happened that are mentioned in the Bible.

The authors question, doubt, and deride non-Christian religions including Islam.

**Islam**

Only three of the books analyzed in this chapter contain information about Islam. A short definition in *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* (1883, 16) states, "The **Mohammedan** religion teaches that Mohammed was the greatest of the prophets (emphasis original)." Redway and Hinman (1897, 107) maintain that Turks, members of the "yellow race" and followers of Muhammad, were "cruel to the Christians, and robbed and oppressed them." Hall devotes almost an entire page of text and describes Islam in some detail. Her characterization, while perpetuating stereotypes, is much less degrading than previous descriptions. Hall (1885, 80) begins, "Long ago, a man called Mahomet was born in Arabia, who had a strange notion that God had chosen him for a prophet to teach people the true religion." She goes on to describe the resistance Muhammad encountered and how he eventually overcame these obstacles. She advances that Muhammad now has millions of followers who worship Allah. She continues to describe the ardent devotion of Islam and that men, women, and children say numerous prayers throughout the day. Despite Hall's initial characterization of "strange" and the following

lengthy discussion of customs in Arabia and Turkey, a nineteenth century student may interpret Muslims as rather devout. Geography schoolbook authors continue to "other" most of the people around the world, yet it appears to be to a lesser degree than previously.

## Women

Women have become much more visible in geography schoolbooks published in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. *Colton's New Introductory Geography* and *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* include no written text about women, yet a few visual images in each schoolbook relay messages about women and their constructed roles. Hall, Frye, and Redway and Hinman, conversely, write women and their work into geography schoolbooks. While many of their descriptions continue to be condescending and work to maintain women's marginalized status, the reader begins to get a glimpse into the daily lives of women. The authors' constructions affirm Western superiority, particularly that of the United States, yet analysis of visual and written representations of women reveal contradictions of both class and gender in these geography schoolbooks. Appearance and character, so enmeshed in the written text in geography schoolbooks from the early nineteenth century, are almost entirely relegated to visual representations. These authors intimate character through descriptions of exoticized customs and women's work.

### Appearance and character

Descriptions of women's physical appearance, so common in geography schoolbooks published in the first half of the nineteenth century, are almost completely limited to visual images rather than written delineation. As suggested in chapter five,

such lengthy, detailed, written representations conveyed to the reader a mental image since there were so few visuals in schoolbooks early in the nineteenth century. Because of changes in printing technology, including decreasing costs for printmaking, schoolbook authors included more and more visuals. One or two visual representations now sum up what previously required written descriptions, and such emphasis on the visual becomes common in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Frye and Redway and Hinman further promulgate the voyeuristic objectification of women, already established by the end of the nineteenth century in geography schoolbooks. Out of a total of twenty-four visual images of women in *Natural Elementary Geography*, seventeen stand alone with no written description and four of these visuals have no background or setting to provide any context for these female characters' lives. "Burmese girl" and "An Arab woman and child" are two examples from Redway and Hinman's textbook (see Figure 7.10). The authors discuss climate, products, race, and even colonizers, yet they include no mention whatsoever of the actual circumstances for these women in the nineteenth century. Instead, the authors present these women for inspection; objectify them, to (re)present the "other."

Frye includes a total of twenty-five visual images of women. Nineteen of these visuals have no accompanying written text and nine are without any context such as a background setting. Again, the author objectifies women for the voyeur's inquisitive pleasure. "Turkish woman," "Woman of India," "Arab," and "Woman of Egypt" are four of the nine women (re)presented in Frye's schoolbook without a background to suggest any context (see Figure 7.11). Only the Indian woman confronts the viewer's gaze as if to resist or, at least, question her objectification. Completely objectified, the Muslim

Figure 7.10. Burmese girl and an Arab woman and child

Figure 7.11. Turkish woman, woman of India, Arab, woman of Egypt

women divert their gaze from confronting the viewer's. Even though Frye (1894, ii) tells us these images were reproduced from photographs and "*are true to nature*," the suggested visual "objectivity" is no less suspect than that of written representations (emphasis original).

From the combined total of forty-nine visual images of women in Frye's and Redway and Hinman's geography schoolbooks, only eight (re)present women in the United States, five of white women and three of black women. Provided a context, women in the United States are (re)presented as active, typically working. With so fewvisual illustrations of women in the United States, the message of who we are and who we are not is clear, thus reinforcing the dichotomous construction of "us" and "them."

Written descriptions of women's physical appearance have decreased by the end of the nineteenth century. Hall (1885, 47) describes in detail the clothing worn by young girls in the Swiss Alps:

> They wear short, red, or flowered skirts, reaching above the ankle; coarse, blue stockings; bodices of black or dark-green stuff, laced up the front over a jacket of white, coarse linen, with large full sleeves gathered in below the elbow; a gay-colored handkerchief around the neck; beside a jaunty little straw hat, for these village girls, never wear bonnets.

Because Hall includes fewer visual representations than the other authors addressed in this chapter, perhaps she felt it necessary to provide her readers with a mental image. Redway and Hinman (1897, 99), on the other hand, only mention the wooden shoes worn by women in the Swiss Alps. The authors describe women in Switzerland according to

their garments, and Moorish women in Spain as physically attractive. Hall (1885, 68) makes two references to the good-looking women, "Here the rich, brave Moors lived happily with their wives and daughters, who were often very beautiful." A few paragraphs later, Hall mentions "the beautiful infidel girls" again.

Another description of women's physical appearance is Redway and Hinman's discussion of Japanese women. While seemingly innocuous, their characterization works to expand the divide between East and West. Redway and Hinman (1897, 188) claim that the Japanese resemble the Chinese and that the women are petite, "The women paint their faces white and their lips red, and fasten up their long black hair with wooden pins." The emphasis on differences in cosmetics application and hair-styling tools helps to construct Japanese women as exotic foreigners. A key mechanism of Orientalizing, Edward Said (1998) reminds us, is essentializing the "other."

**Exoticized customs**

In order to further exoticize and "other" non-Western women, these authors mention the cultural practices of foot binding in China, veiling and seclusion in predominantly Muslim countries, and the child-rearing customs of Egyptians, Japanese, and Native Americans. Again, this emphasis on difference reminds readers that they are the standard for comparison and that their customs and practices are "normal," "natural," and the way things are supposed to be.

Hall and Redway and Hinman address foot binding in China and both descriptions work to construct Chinese women as infants who need to be taken care of. Colton, while not discussing the practice at all in the written text, provides a visual illustration to reinforce the paternalistic care necessary for Chinese women (see Figure 7.12). Here,

Figure 7.12. A scene in China

capable men attend to the helpless women. Hall (1885, 79) touches on the economic requirements for foot binding practices. Her description infantalizes these women:

> The ladies of the rich and noble families have their poor little feet bound up tightly, and the toes turned under when they are babies, so that they cannot grow. A full-grown woman will have a foot only three or four inches long, and is proud of her little embroidered shoes. But it is a queer sort of beauty too; for beside the pain at first, and afterward the little use of her feet, it cannot seem pretty to us to see a grown person toddling around like a child.

Hall (1885, 79) further exoticizes women and men in China by reporting that they eat puppies and consider them great delicacies. Redway and Hinman avoid the diminutive "little" and the overt paternalistic overtones although their choice of a visual image is of a young girl (see Figure 7.13). According to these authors, "Chinese ladies can seldom walk well, because when they were young their feet were kept tightly bandaged to prevent them from growing. Thus their feet, though small, are terribly deformed (Redway and Hinman 1897, 115)." Redway and Hinman imply small feet are attractive, providing some insight into Western symbols of beauty at this time, yet they deem manipulating feet to achieve such a standard undesirable. Crucial to cultural imperialism is confining the "other" to their body, thus defining them according to conventional and idealized notions of beauty (Young 1990).

The cultural practice of veiling is briefly mentioned by Redway and Hinman (1897, 130) in their discussion of Morocco, "In the sunny streets are seen women with their faces concealed in the folds of their white robes." They even include a visual illustration to enhance their written characterization (see Figure 7.14). More commonly addressed in discussions about Arabia and Turkey, written discussions and visual images

Figure 7.13. A Chinese girl

Figure 7.14. Street scene in Morocco

of veiled women abound (see Figure 7.11). Hall (1885, 81) while providing no visual, explains women in Turkey and Arabia veil their faces for "It is a great disgrace for a lady to show her face to any man except her father or husband." She further reinforces the supposedly poor treatment of these women in her description of seclusion and polygamy.

Hall (1885, 81) is the only author in this selection of books to mention seclusion or polygamy, and she even touches on the economic prosperity necessary for the seclusion of women:

> Rich men have many wives, instead of one as with us, and keep them shut up in a part of the house where men never come. These rooms for women are called *harems*, and joined to them are beautiful gardens (italics original).

She goes on to say there are often hundreds of women in one household because of the large number of maidservants for each wife. Despite the economic privilege of these women and their beautiful surroundings, Hall (1885, 81) claims:

> Women are not respected nor treated so well as in Western countries. In all the cities, there are slave-markets, where beautiful young girls are sold as slaves.

The cultural practices of Muslim women are discussed less in the written text of geography schoolbooks published in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, yet visual illustrations of these women continue to be popular.

Veiling and seclusion are marks of prestige prevailing in middle and upper class urban regions. Seclusion through grand architectural arrangements and eunuchs was beyond the financial means of poor and rural peasant families. Poor women were typically not secluded at home but did veil themselves when they went out. Rural

peasant women were not secluded at home and typically did not veil themselves because it would impede their work (Badran 1993, 200; Badran 1995, 4; Shaarawi 1987, 8). The rigid controls of upper-class seclusion were relaxed in lower-class homes because the lifestyle could not sustain seclusion. Weaker patriarchal control of the marriage, relaxed notions of honor, less pressure for the maintenance of family ties through marriage, and the absence of seclusion are just a few of the implications for gender relations in lower-class homes (Badran 1993, 205).

Discussions of child-rearing practices also work to exoticize and "other" women and cultures constructed as radically different than those of privileged, white, Protestants living in the United States. Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins (1993, 146) in their analysis of representations in *National Geographic,* explain how photographs of women and their children symbolize universal motherhood, thus "motherhood, like beauty, is thought to be central to the definition of femininity." Hall (1885, 87) describes Egyptian children as dirty and dressed in rags not because they are neglected but because of their mother's superstition:

> Mothers are constantly afraid that some envious person may bewitch their darlings with the 'evil eye' if they should look too pretty. Therefore they never 'dress them up' to go out. Beside the dirt and rags, many of the children have sore eyes, which are very common in Egypt; so that no one would ever stop a nurse to say, 'What a sweet little creature!'

Not only are the children of Egypt dirty with sore eyes, the author warns that children are at-risk of harm in public, which speaks volumes about the "character" of Egyptians in general.

Children in Japan are equally neglected and burdened by cultural responsibility according to Frye. The visual illustration "Japanese girls" shows two young girls with babies strapped to their backs (see Figure 7.15). While Frye never explains that the babies are, most likely, younger siblings, written text does accompany the illustration. Frye (1894, 39) asks:

> Have you found out what the girls in the picture have on their backs? They wish to play, but there are little babies at home that must be cared for. The girls tie the babies upon their backs, and are soon playing just as hard as the other children.

While seemingly innocuous, the characterization suggests mothers neglect the young girls and the babies. The young girls are burdened by caring for their younger siblings who are further neglected or possibly in harm's way by being strapped to their older sisters' backs. Images of "odd" mothering, according to Lutz and Collins (1993), reinforce "othering" of non-white women whose work is depicted as drudgery rather than skilled. The necessary competency and adeptness for performing daily tasks is undermined by a hierarchy of labor deemed appropriate for women. Physical labor, viewed as inappropriate for middle-class, white, Victorian women, reinforced constructions of non-white women as victims of their cultures.

Frye constructs American Indian children as equally at risk of injury and neglected by their mothers. Accompanying an illustration of a baby in a cradle board, Frye (1894, 37) writes:

> Can you tell what is in the cradle that hangs on the tree? It is a tiny baby with round, black eyes, straight hair and red-brown skin. This cradle is made of a piece of board, wrapped in cloth. Day

Figure 7.15. Japanese girls

> after day, the Indian baby will swing from the branch of a tree. He will also take long journeys on his mother's back (see Figure 7.16).

The baby is confined to a board and left hanging for days, according to Frye. Without any further discussion, the reader is left to question the parenting capabilities of American Indians. Frye never addresses the connection between these methods for carrying children and women's physical ability to work.

**Women's work**

Never before in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks has women's work been so overtly addressed as it is in these textbooks published in the 1880s and 1890s. The authors' written descriptions and visual illustrations include work in fibers from picking cotton to textile mills, agriculture from harvesting coffee, rice, and tea to caring for livestock, and the more private sphere of housekeeping and child-rearing. The authors even mention a few "notable" women. While many of these characterizations work to maintain women's marginalized status, particularly non-white women, they do provide a fuller glimpse into the daily lives of women in comparison to representations in earlier geography schoolbooks.

Women working with some form of fibers, traditionally considered women's work, receives, by far, the most attention from these authors. The arduous task of picking cotton continues to be represented as performed by African Americans, typically women (see Figure 7.17). This illustration from *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* shows seven people harvesting cotton. The two female figures in the foreground pick the ripe bolls and place them in a basket. The three figures in the distant background do the same. A man and woman in the middle carry the filled baskets to a wagon to be taken to

Figure 7.16. Cradle board

Figure 7.17. Picking cotton I

the gin. Reminiscent of visual representations depicting slaves working in fields, the illustration suggests African Americans alone continue to pick cotton despite their emancipation. An image of poor, working-class, white women working in the fields would have shattered the national and international project of defining white women living in the United States as lucky and prosperous in comparison to women from other countries. The written text accompanying the visual describes the southern United States, but says little about the work of the people living there. The author writes, "About one third of the inhabitants are negroes . . . and cotton is by far the most valuable crop (*The Eclectic Elementary Geography* 1883, 33)." While the author makes no connection between African Americans and picking cotton in the written text, the reader can assume, after viewing the image, that these are the people who perform this task.

Frye also represents picking cotton as performed by African Americans (see Figure 7.18). Seven figures, three men and four women, harvest cotton. Instead of addressing the painstaking conditions of such work, Frye in the written text concentrates on the climate necessary to grow cotton. He does, however, say most people in the world wear clothes made of cotton, "Nearly all the rest of the human race, except the lowest savages, use it in some portion of their dress (Frye 1894, 70)." Perhaps Frye is attempting to justify the former enslaved status of the people pictured working in the cotton field. Because they play an active role in the process of cotton production and wear cotton clothing, they transcended their formerly savage state.

Figure 7.18. Picking cotton II

The illustration in Redway and Hinman's geography schoolbook similarly suggests formerly enslaved African Americans harvest cotton (see Figure 7.19). Four women and two children stoop over to pick the cotton and then place the bolls in the large bags strapped diagonally over their bodies. A man holding a horse oversees the cotton picking. Redway and Hinman explain the importance of cotton and describe in detail the growing, gathering, and processing of raw cotton. They fail to explain the sweltering hot, insect infested, painful task of actually picking cotton, but they do address that mostly African Americans performed such labor:

> When the country was first settled white laborers were scarce in the colonies, and shiploads of negroes were brought from Africa and sold as slaves. The negroes worked well, so the trade in men increased until many negroes were owned, particularly by the great planters of the South. In 1863 the slaves were declared free. Most of the work on plantations is still done by the Negroes, although the land is owned chiefly by white men (Redway and Hinman 1897, 54-55).

The written text does not address at all the hideousness of slavery, and it further blames slavery on a lack of white laborers rather than their refusal to perform undesirable tasks or their sheer laziness. What Redway and Hinman do touch on is that share cropping, although disguised as free labor, created an arrangement hardly distinct from slavery. Furthermore, African American women as domestic workers, agricultural laborers (beyond picking cotton), or as family, church, and community members is never addressed. Black men and women are depicted as passive objects happily accepting their labor role and position in southern society.

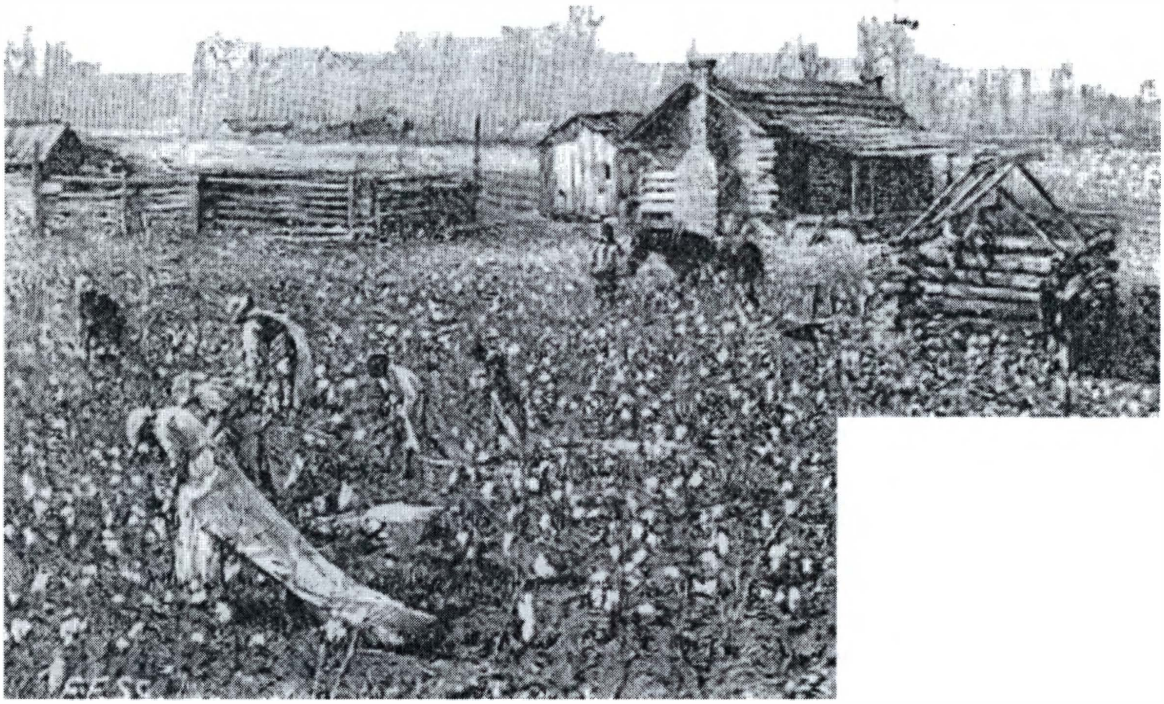

Figure 7.19. Picking cotton III

Additional representations of women working with some form of fibers include variations of weaving. Hall (1885, 89), in her description of Africa, asserts:

> Most of the negro women weave baskets and mats of palm leaves and willow twigs. The men live by hunting and fishing, and, indeed, do nothing else: for, if a little grain is planted, the women do all the digging and cooking; for they are considered only as slaves.

Hall's characterization, while acknowledging tasks typically performed by working women, reinforces the construction of the fortunate, white, Protestant, middle and upper-class women living in the United States. She fails to recognize in her text that many women living in the United States also perform numerous arduous tasks because such an acknowledgement would shatter the constructed myth of the lucky housewife.

Frye's representations of women and girls who weave and make cloth work less to bolster the image of women in the United States, yet the written text is condescending because of the racist tone. In his introduction, Frye (1894, 1) states, "In the land of the brown people we shall see the brown girls weaving pretty baskets." In his section labeled "Malay or Brown People," Frye (1894, 46) narrates; "Now the little girl will help her mother spin cotton into yarn. Some day they will weave the yarn into cloth, and make new clothes for the whole family." The statement appears harmless, yet when compared to representations of women making cloth in the United States, the racist construction becomes apparent. Frye, in his written text, never addresses women in the United States making cloth, but he does include two visual illustrations (see Figure 7.20). Here we see women working in factories and textile mills. They are tidy, attractive white women surrounded by technologically advanced machinery to aid in their labor. The contrast

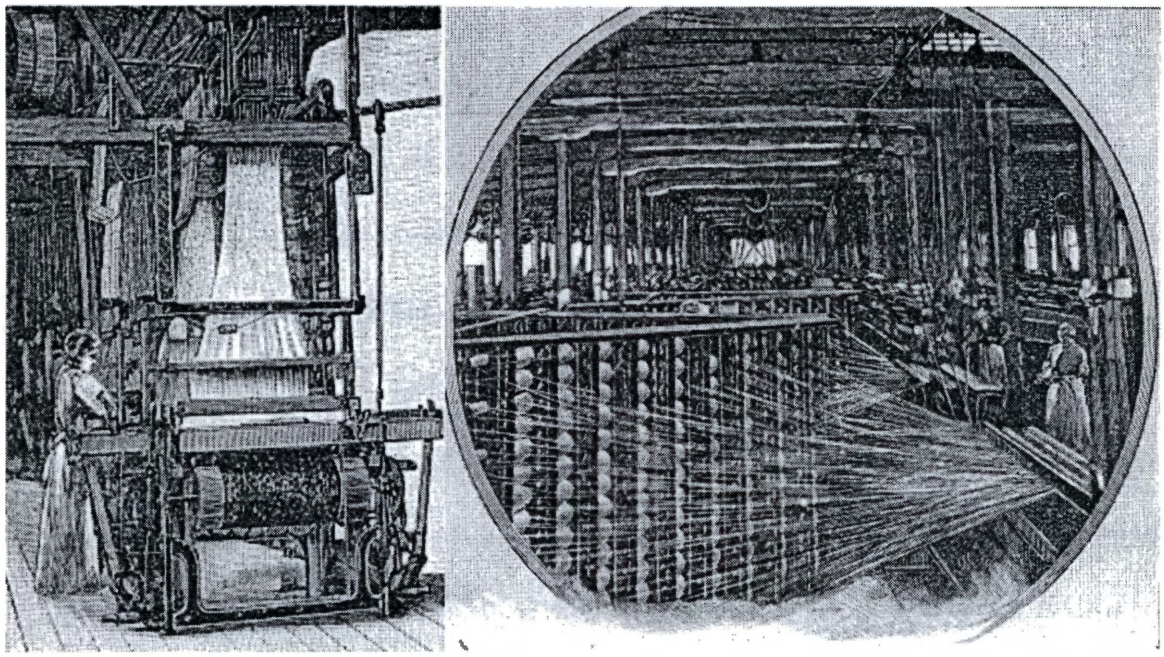

Figure 7.20. Silk weaving at Paterson and southern cotton mill

accentuates difference and reinforces the construction of highly "civilized" white people living and working in the United States compared to the less "civilized" brown people in Java.

Frye similarly treats the process of cloth making in Africa. He describes how a young girl helps her mother make cloth:

> You could never guess how they made the cloth. They soaked long strips of bark in water, and then pounded them till they were very soft. When the bark was dry, they gave it to the father to make into clothes (Frye 1894, 35-36).

The initial astonishment of the explanation works to demean the described process. The ingenuity and the demanding physical labor of the production is lost in the amazement further suggesting a hierarchy among people and constructed races.

Redway and Hinman include two visual representations that thoroughly depict intricate weaving processes in Colombia and Persia. Figure 7.21 shows six women hand weaving cloth in Colombia. The base or warp threads are harnessed to the side of a building so they can be pulled taut for the women to weave. They pull the weft through on a shuttle to weave intricate patterns. No where in the written text do Redway and Hinman mention anything about weaving or cloth making in Colombia.

Figure 7.22 shows seven women weaving a rug. Two layers of warp threads hang vertically from a loom so the women can more easily control the design made by the weft threads woven horizontally. The visual even shows the elaborate scaffolding the women use to support themselves as they complete the rug. The only mention these women receive in the written text is Redway and Hinman's (1897, 121) statement, "The Persians are noted for the silks, carpets, and fine shawls which they weave by hand." Conversely,

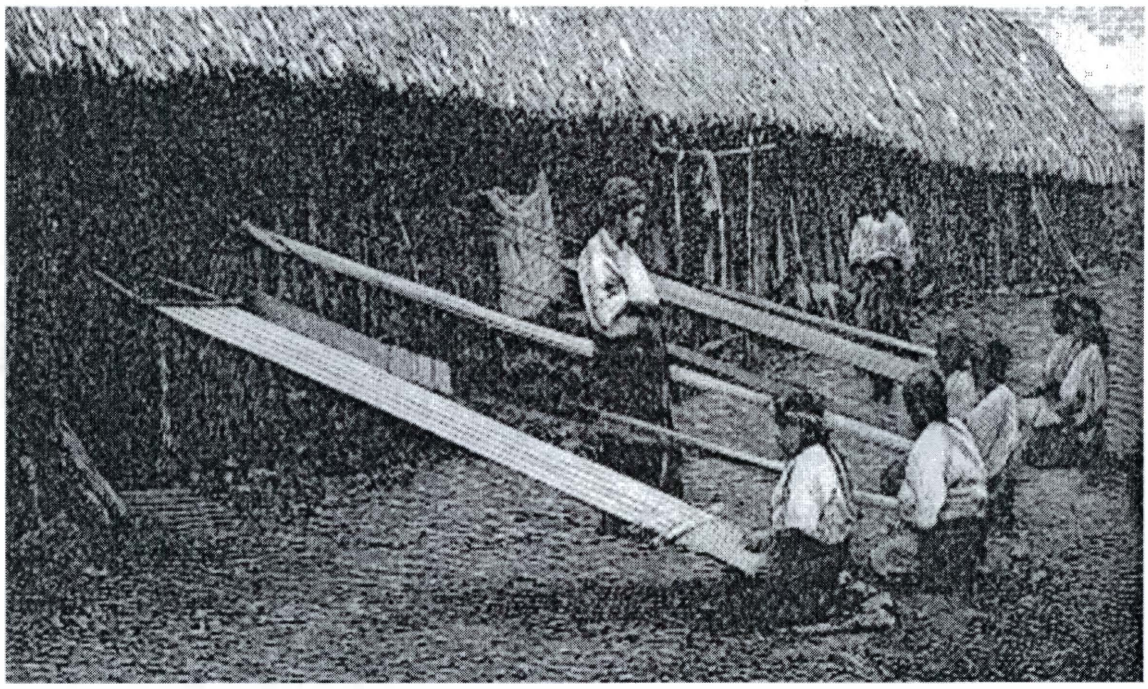

Figure 7.21. Natives weaving cloth in Columbia

Figure 7.22. Weaving a Persian rug

Redway and Hinman devote considerable attention in their written text about weaving cloth in New England factories.

Figure 7.23 shows the interior of a large cotton mill in Manchester, New England. Women and girls operate the looms while men oversee their work. Redway and Hinman's (1897, 52) description is detailed:

> Cotton is brought to the mills in bales. It is first opened and cleaned, and then carded and combed into slender ropes of loose fiber. These are twisted or spun into yarn, which is then placed upon the looms, and the quick shuttle, darting back and forth, weaves it into cloth. Thousands of men, women, and girls are employed in the cotton factories.

Perhaps the authors' emphasis on home geography supports such detailed descriptions of familiar industries close to students' home towns, yet it really works to emphasize difference and distance between cultures. Instead of explaining how women in Colombia and Persia hand weave in the same way women in the United States weave assisted by machinery, Redway and Hinman reinforce a racialized hierarchy.

The visual images and written descriptions of factory work in the United States are even more problematic in that the authors disguise the severe and harsh aspects of factory work for women, children, and men. The visual images (see Figures 7.20 and 7.23) show clean, well-lit, and, presumably, well-ventilated rooms where primarily women work in an orderly and timely manner. Even Hall's (1885, 105) written description suggests such a pleasing environment:

> In the great brick factories, thousands of men, women, and children are busy every day, making cotton and woollen cloths, glass, nails, screws, and many other useful things; and all this is done so

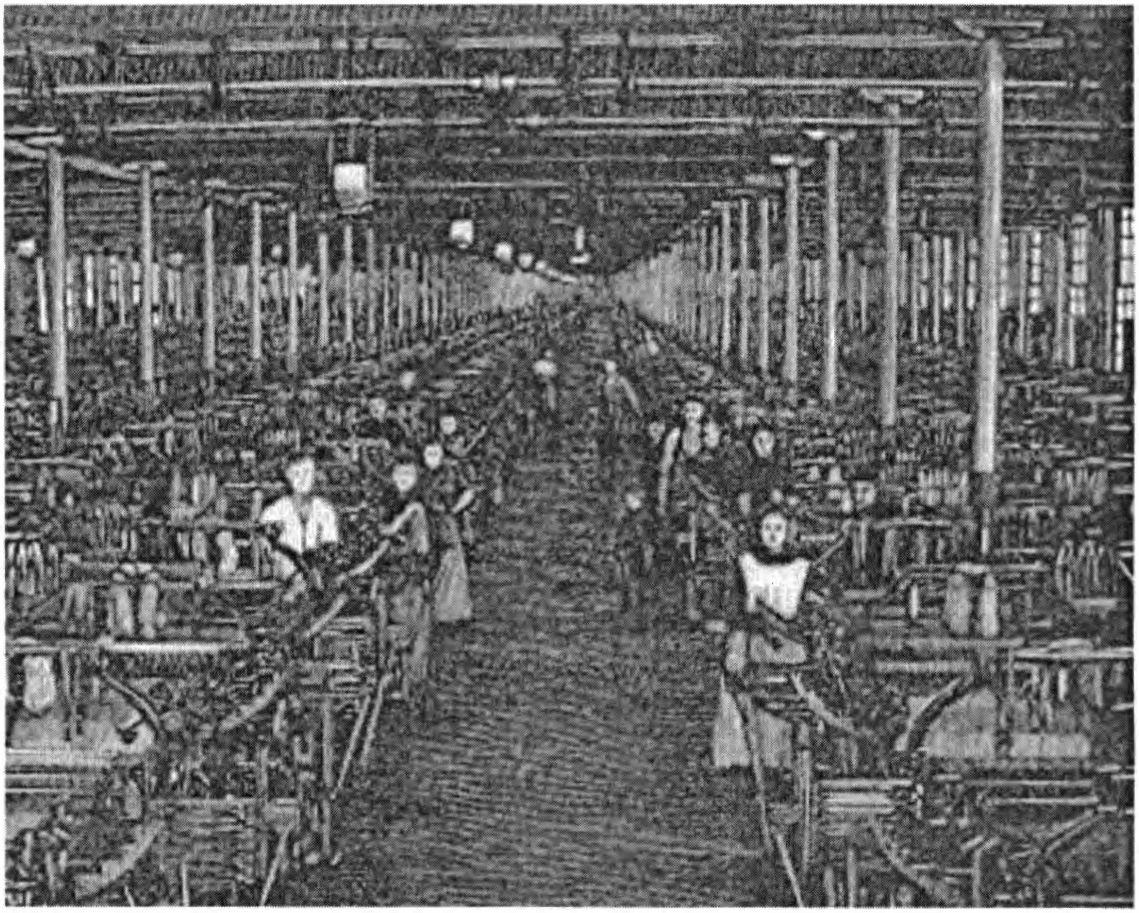

Figure 7.23. Cotton mill, Manchester

> wonderfully fast, that it is almost like *fairy* work, and beautiful to see (my emphasis).

After the turn of the twentieth century, Frederick W. Taylor would help to make these "fairies" even more efficient, but for Hall the dynamic productivity is already thriving. These representations, both visual and written, fail to reveal the actual circumstances of factory life in the late nineteenth century, particularly the use of child labor. The massive factory strikes of the early twentieth century confirm labor's demand for improved working conditions, but a more realistic representation of factory work would obliterate the construction of women living in the United States as lucky, fortunate, and naturally prosperous.

Representations of frontier women in these books help to reinforce the construction of helpless, passive women (see Figures 7.2 and 7.24). In both illustrations the women are much more passive than the men. In Figure 7.2, Colton's image, one seated woman holds a baby while another seated woman appears to be mending. Figure 7.24 shows two seated women again, one in each wagon, where the men protect and care for the women. Instead of acknowledging the very active role women played in expanding the empire westward, the authors chose to portray women in their proper Victorian roles as needy, docile creatures. In her written description, Hall (1885, 108-109) reveals a slightly more realistic account of frontier life:

> Often whole families, who did not mind a hard, rough life, would pack up all they had in one or two wagons, and set out for a long journey through pathless woods.

Figure 7.24. Moving westward

Hall further explains that the women and children would ride in the wagons while the men rode on horses, which her visual image clearly illustrates. The "hard, rough life" she mentions, however, is not represented visually, further enhancing women's constructed roles.

Two of the geography schoolbooks analyzed in this chapter mention a few notable women, but include little or no discussion. Hall briefly refers to Queen Isabella of Spain and how she and King Ferdinand eventually drove the Moors from Spain. She goes on to say, "We have good reason to remember Isabella, as she sent out the men who first sailed across the Atlantic, and found the new continent of America (Hall 1885, 69)." Another notable woman for Hall is Florence Nightingale. In her discussion of Russia, Hall (1885, 73) says, "You have probably heard people speak of the Crimean War, and Florence Nightingale, a kind lady, who went out to nurse the sick soldiers." If Hall's audience was not familiar with the renowned nurse, they learned about her on their own. The only other widely known woman mentioned by name in these books is Pocahontas. Redway and Hinman (1897, 32), in their discussion on settling the United States, say, "One of the first parties was led by Captain John Smith, who wrote the first stories about the Indian girl Pocahontas." The authors' statement, however, suggests credibility for John Smith and his interpretation of encountering American Indians upon arrival.

Representations of Inuit men, women, and children further perpetuate the construction of the lucky housewife living in the United States. Hall (1885, 97) constructs contradictory characterizations of the Inuit, "The Esquimaux are a stupid, ignorant people," yet explains how they build houses out of snow. She also says that the men and women work together, but such recognition by one of these authors is unusual.

Typically, they emphasize private and public spheres for women and men, similar to Frye's illustrations of Inuit men and women (see Figure 7.25). This illustration of the exterior view precedes the interior view of the "Eskimo hut." The two male figures stand outside and confront the viewer's gaze, as they stare back. The male figures become active subjects as they interact with the viewer through their gaze. The three women, however, are inside with two children (see Figure 7.26). One woman is stoking the fire on which she will prepare the fish in the right foreground. One child is watching her intently. The other child is playing with the woman who is leaning against the wall while the third woman reclines on a block along the back wall. None of these women or children looks out at the viewer; they are merely objects for viewing. Modern research into the actual gender relations of the Inuit, indicate that before Western influence, Inuit men and women frequently crossed gender role lines to help each other with tasks. As Lee Guemple (1995) has observed, despite gender divisions in the allocation of work, Inuit women's work is not thought to be less significant than men's. Work performance establishes the level of respectability rather than the specific tasks.

Representations of men and women working together outside the home would shatter the myth of private and public spheres, yet men and women harvesting coffee in Brazil is a popular topic both visually and in the written text of these geography schoolbooks (see Figure 7.27). In Colton's (1882, 58) illustration, we see men and women working together to harvest coffee berries, although his written description is scanty, "It [Rio de Janeiro] exports more coffee than any other city in the world." *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* (1883, 62) also includes an illustration of men and women harvesting coffee (see Figure 7.28). Like Colton's written description, the

Figure 7.25. Chuglu

Figure 7.26. Inside an Eskimo hut

Figure 7.27. Picking the coffee berry

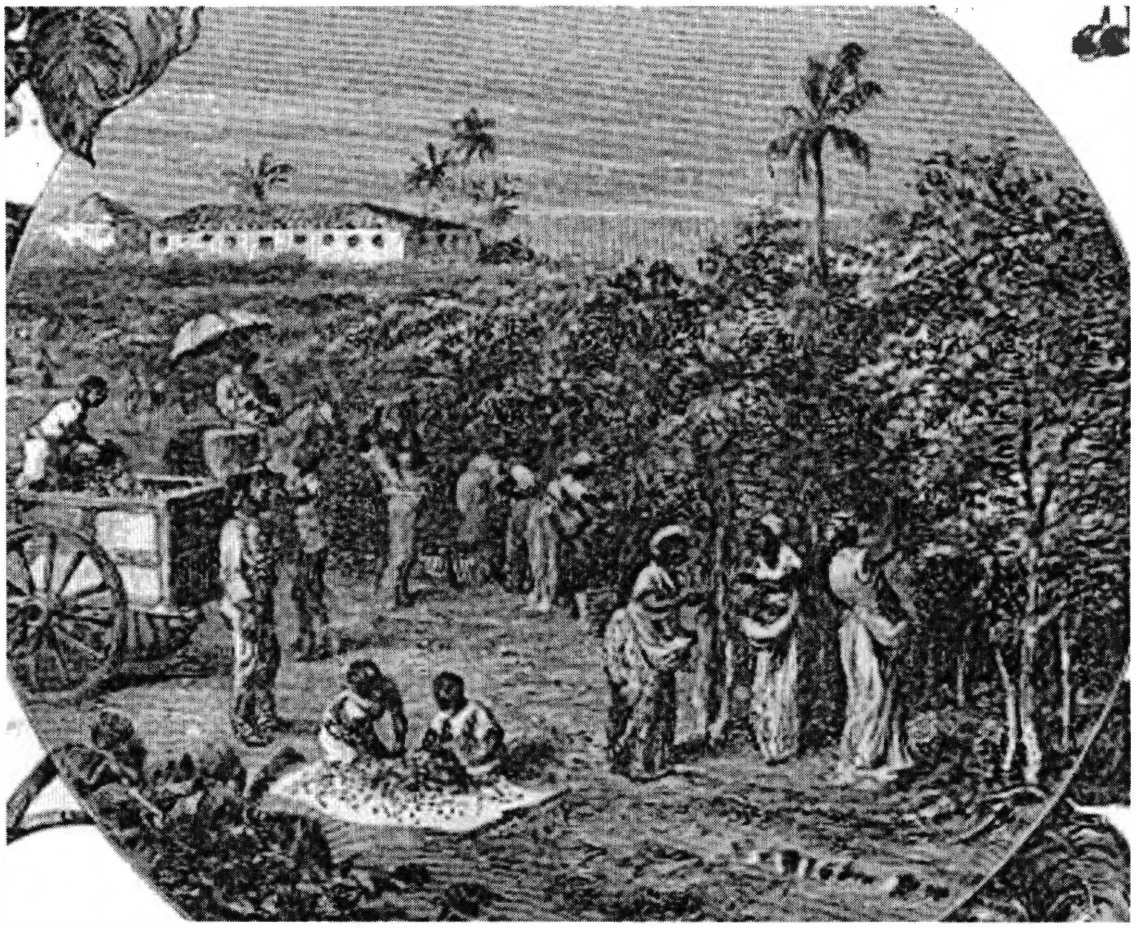

Figure 7.28. Gathering coffee

explanation here is equally lacking, "It supplies half of the coffee used in the world (*The Eclectic Elementary Geography* 1883, 62)." Frye's visual image shows only women picking coffee with a child collecting the berries in a basket (see Figure 7.29). Frye, however, goes into detail, describing the climate necessary to grow coffee and the growth process of the coffee berry, but never discusses the people who actually harvest the coffee. Even in the nineteenth century, private and public boundaries were quite often more ambiguous and flexible in regards to women's work than the texts typically indicate. For the middle-class Victorian woman, it was improper to take part in the public sphere, specifically in regards to work. For the nineteenth century geography schoolbook authors, this provided the context in which they constructed their representations.

Even though we now recognize that women's work, both inside or outside the home, allows men to work and contributes to global economies, in these books it is consistently relegated lower status than men's work. The blatant racism also works to de-value women's roles. Another illustration in Frye's geography schoolbook reinforces the sexist notion that women belong in a private sphere only, at the same time it perpetuates racism (see Figure 7.30). A woman holding a child stands just outside the doorway of her home as two young boys lean against another dwelling. They confront the gaze of the viewer which helps to make them less passive objects for our viewing and more active subjects. Relegated to the private sphere of housekeeping and child-rearing, the woman is just outside her home. This is a common technique in these nineteenth century geography schoolbooks for assigning women a domestic role. And, although

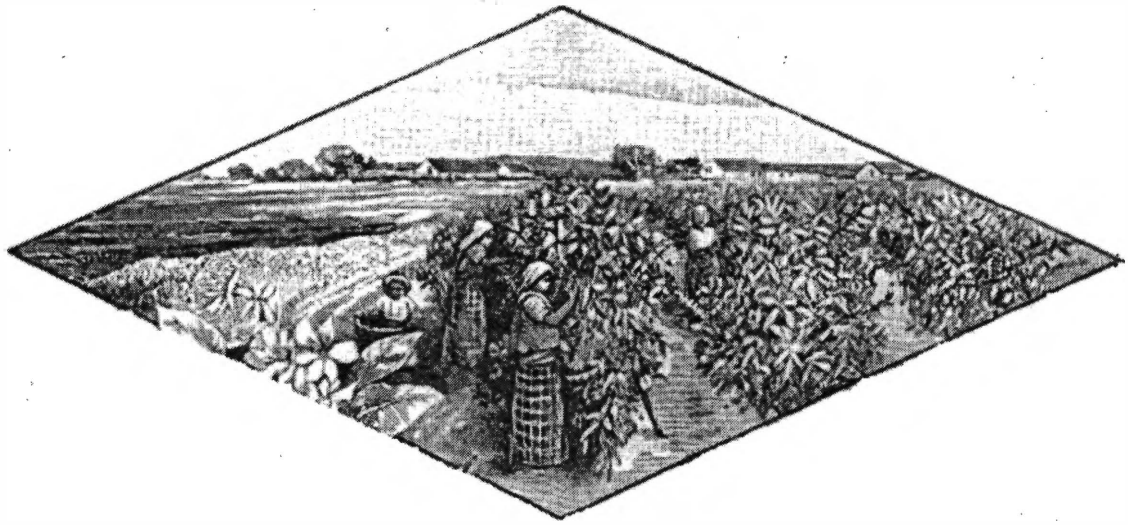

Figure 7.29. Coffee plantation

Figure 7.30. Kaffir hut

Frye (1894, 36) claims, "They are a brave people and have fought hard to prevent the white men from taking their lands," the label "Kaffir" is quite disparaging. Kaffir is the South African equivalent to nigger in the United States, as Mark Mathabane (1986, xiii) has explained and is discussed in chapters five and six.

While women became increasingly visible in geography schoolbooks published in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the representations continued to reinforce women's marginalized status and the mythical fortunate housewife living in the United States. While detailed descriptions of women's physical appearance seemingly disappeared, visual images replaced the previously written objectifications. The number of exoticized customs is down from previous accounts, yet the accentuation of distance and difference works to "other" exotically constructed women. Authors depict more examples of women's work than in previously published schoolbooks, yet the emphasis maintains women's stereotypical roles in the private sphere. Sanitized images of women represented in public spaces further disguise the often harsh realities.

## Race

Constructions of race continue to stigmatize and "other" groups of people living in the United States and elsewhere in geography schoolbooks published in the 1880s and 1890s. The pronounced environmental determinism in previously published schoolbooks becomes more subtle in this selection of books. Classifying people according to skin color continues, yet visual images replace vivid, written, physical descriptions of physiognomy. Rigid classifications of cultural groups and their seemingly immutable traits in these books reinforce the already implacable nineteenth century doctrine of race. Degrading non-white women and men from countries other than the United States or

those living in the United States helped to elevate the status of white, middle-class men and women in their own eyes, thus making them feel superior to and very different from non-Western women and men.

**Effects of climate**

All five of the geography schoolbooks analyzed in this chapter include sections discussing the torrid, temperate, and frigid zones, yet only two of the authors directly address the effects of climate on people. When visual illustrations are included to reinforce the written text, the images depict the torrid and frigid zones, but not the temperate zone. By excluding the temperate zone, the authors reinforce this specific place and climate as the standard for comparison. The torrid and frigid zones become curious oddities for inspection. Colton provides an illustration of the frigid zone, and the accompanying written text explains how snow covers the land and that there are few plants (see Figure 7.31). Colton (1882, 12) says people living in this zone, "during their long dark winter, have to dress in thick furs to keep from freezing" and "the people live in small huts made of ice and snow." His depiction of life in the torrid zone is less flattering (see Figure 7.32). Here, men must fight many more ferocious animals as the visual suggests, yet Colton (1882, 12) describes the people as lazy, "The people often lead a careless, idle life in these warm countries; for the soil yields them all the food they need without much cultivation."

Redway and Hinman similarly provide visual illustrations (see Figure 7.33). While their images show families interacting and stereotypical clothing, shelters, and settings, the authors never address actual people in their written text. Visual images of

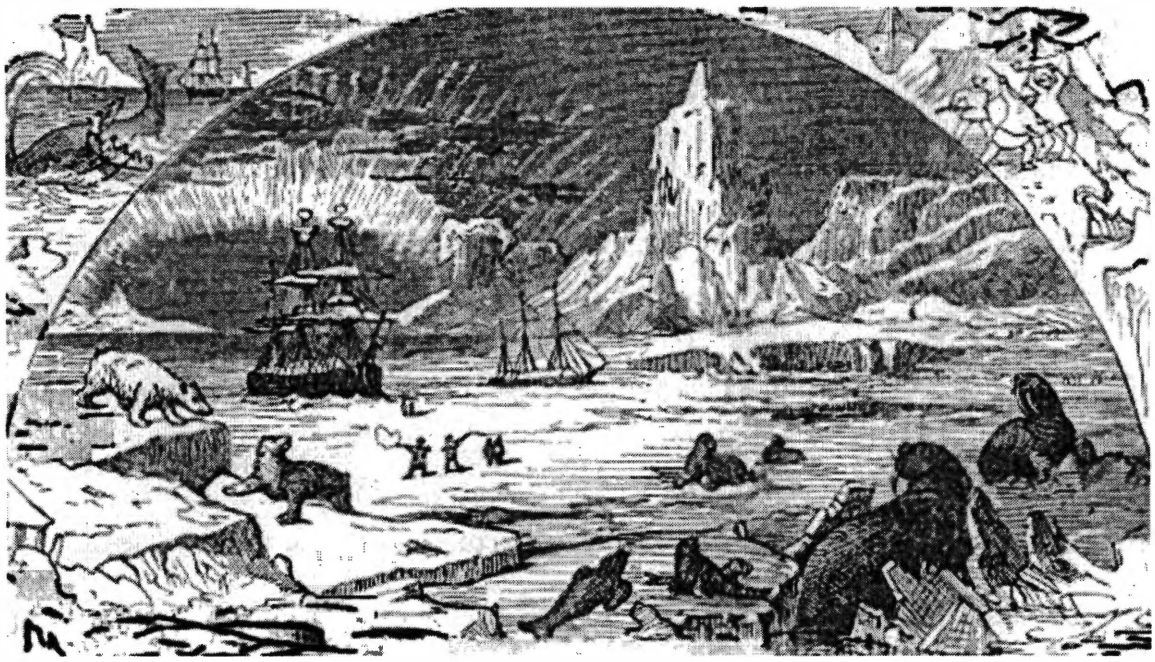

Figure 7.31. A cold region

Figure 7.32. Animals found in hot regions

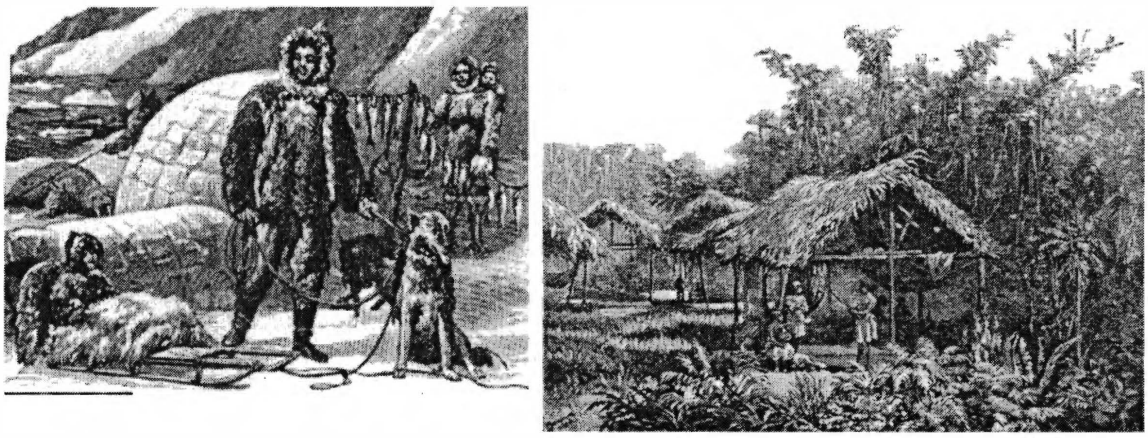

Figure 7.33. Life in the frigid zone and life in the torrid zone

people without an accompanying written description objectifies them, further perpetuating a colonial attitude of superiority for the voyeur.

Hall's interpretation of climate is much more divinely inspired. While she includes no visual images, she does address differences in cultures according to climatic effects. She explains how people living in cold regions need warm clothing and higher caloric foods. Conversely, people in hot climates need lighter clothing and lower calorie foods, yet, according to Hall, God has taken care of these needs. For people in the frigid zone, "God has ordered every thing rightly; so that the animals in such lands have fur-covered skins (Hall 1885, 58)." On the other hand, for inhabitants of the torrid zone, Hall (1885, 58) says, "God has therefore given them grain, vegetables, and fruits to live upon: and the hotter the country, the more cool, juicy fruits there are; so that the very poorest people may have them." Hall's lessons in geography have reverted back to the proselytizing style of Jedidiah Morse from the early nineteenth century. Perhaps the audience would question Hall's explanation of animals with fur if they knew anything about animals in hotter regions. The environmental determinism of the previously published geography schoolbooks lessens in the late nineteenth century, yet constructions of race according to physiognomy are equally arresting.

**Physiognomy**

Like the geography schoolbooks analyzed in chapter six, these authors categorize people around the world into five distinct races. While these authors were working within the "scientific" context of the time and "scientific" evidence accorded these racial categories, modern research allows us to recognize the underlying purposes for such racist claims. These authors, within their privileged social contexts, were working to

justify their supposed superiority at the expense of non-white people at home and abroad. Through these racially determined categories, they could justify global imperialism and colonization, and nativist sentiments in the United States. In these geography schoolbooks published in the 1880s and 1890s, five distinct races become further entrenched with written descriptions and visual images.

In his 1882 schoolbook, Colton devotes two different sections to "Races of Men." In part one of his book, he categorizes men according to skin color and includes a visual image to reinforce his written descriptions (see Figure 7.34). Here, the feminized white man is the focal point surrounded by four fierce-looking non-white men. Colton (1882, 15) states:

> We belong to what is called the **White Race**, or people the color of whose skin is white, or nearly so; while, as every child knows, there are people whose skin is of a black color. These are called negroes and belong to the **Black Race**, some of whom most children have seen, especially if they live in the larger cities; for many of these people have crossed the ocean, and have come to live in the United States (emphasis original).

Colton immediately ostracizes students not belonging to the "white race" by the "we" in his introductory statement. Furthermore, Colton implies black people came to the United States willingly, as if they desired to live in the large urban areas. His additional racialized categories are equally derogatory, and since Colton assumes his audience is familiar with black and white people, he provides no description of their physical appearance beyond skin color. *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* includes a visual image depicting five racialized stereotypes of men accompanied by written descriptions of their geographic locations (see Figure 7.35). Again, the focal point is a white man

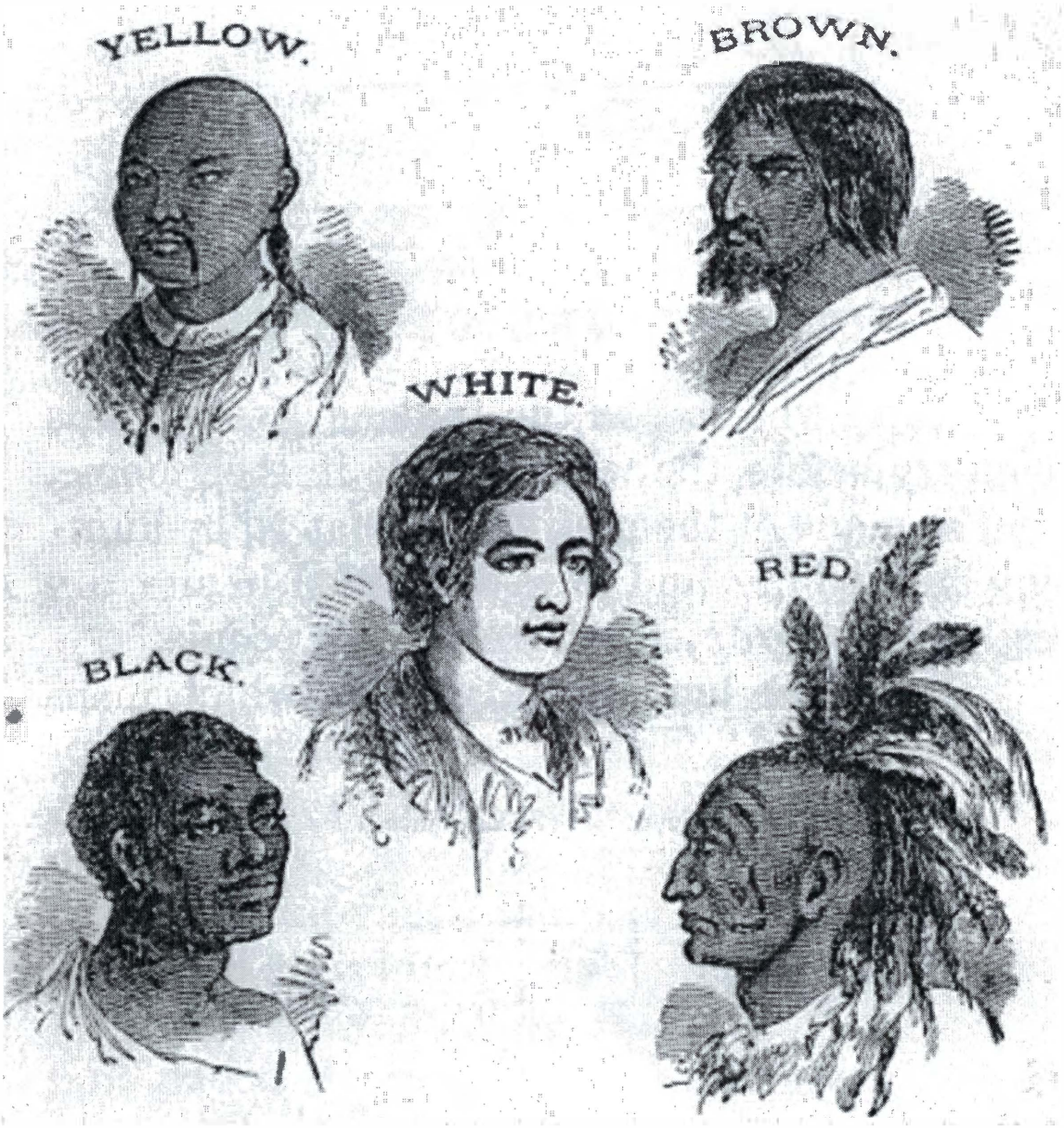


Figure 7.34. Races of men I


Figure 7.35. Races of men II

symmetrically balanced between non-white men. The labels, unlike Colton's, are no longer colors referring to skin tones, but classifications relating to geographic locations. The proclaimed superiority of the white race is patent in *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* (1883, 14):

> The **Caucasian** or white race is superior to all, and exceeds every other race in numbers. White men can be found all over the earth, but they are most numerous in Europe (emphasis original).

The population summary chart near the end of the book suggests otherwise, listing the population of Asia as 823,155,251, greater than Africa, North America, South America, Europe, and Australia combined (*The Eclectic Elementary Geography* 1883, 80). And, according to the author, nearly all of the "Mongolian or yellow race" live in Asia, thus outnumbering the white race.

Hall, again, provides no visual illustration, but does address differences in people based on skin color. She suggests:

> By traveling over the earth, the people who live in different parts have become a little acquainted with one another. There are on the earth many different kinds of people, with different ways of living; some white, some black, some brown, some tawny, some yellowish-red (Hall 1885, 8).

While her description is strictly limited to skin color, it perpetuates the "scientifically" supported, yet arbitrarily assigned categorizations of humans.

In the last decade of the nineteenth century, discussions about race change as do the visual representations. The authors continue to categorize people according to skin color and describe physical features, but there is greater emphasis on where people live. A new visual image of the globe delineates what is now referred to in these late

nineteenth century geography schoolbooks as the "Homes of the Races" (see Figure 7.36).

In Frye's text, visual images of people representing the various constructed races now include numerous illustrations instead of the typical head shots of five men such as in *Colton's New Introductory Geography* or *The Eclectic Elementary Geography.* Frye devotes nineteen pages to a section titled "People" where he describes various races categorized by skin color. He begins with the "black race" whose "home," according to Frye, is Africa. Frye includes a boy in his narrative to demonstrate a day in the life of this young African. Frye uses the boy named "Tibbu" to authenticate his description. In a footnote, Frye (1894, 35) tells us, "Tibbu is the name of a famous Kongo chief." Frye imparts this information to assure the reader of his familiarity with Africa. He, of course, describes Tibbu as black and that "his hair is woolly (Frye 1894, 35)." Frye goes on to describe Tibbu's daily routine. He condescendingly concludes his discussion of Tibbu:

> Isn't this a queer place? There are no books nor schools, and Tibbu never saw a picture . . . Negro children are very fond of music . . . They have many games, also, and like to dance and play ball (Frye 1894, 36).

Frye fails to inform the reader of the many things familiar to Tibbu that would be unfamiliar to them. Even had Frye included such information, it, most likely, would suggest difference implying some inherent deficiency in Tibbu and Africans, in general.

Frye also describes "Kaffirs," analyzed previously in this chapter, and "Hottentots" and includes visuals to reinforce his message (see Figures 7.30 and 7.37). The image shows a make-shift tent with a lonely, almost nude, male figure, standing outside the dwelling. Even though Frye (1894, 37) tells the reader these people

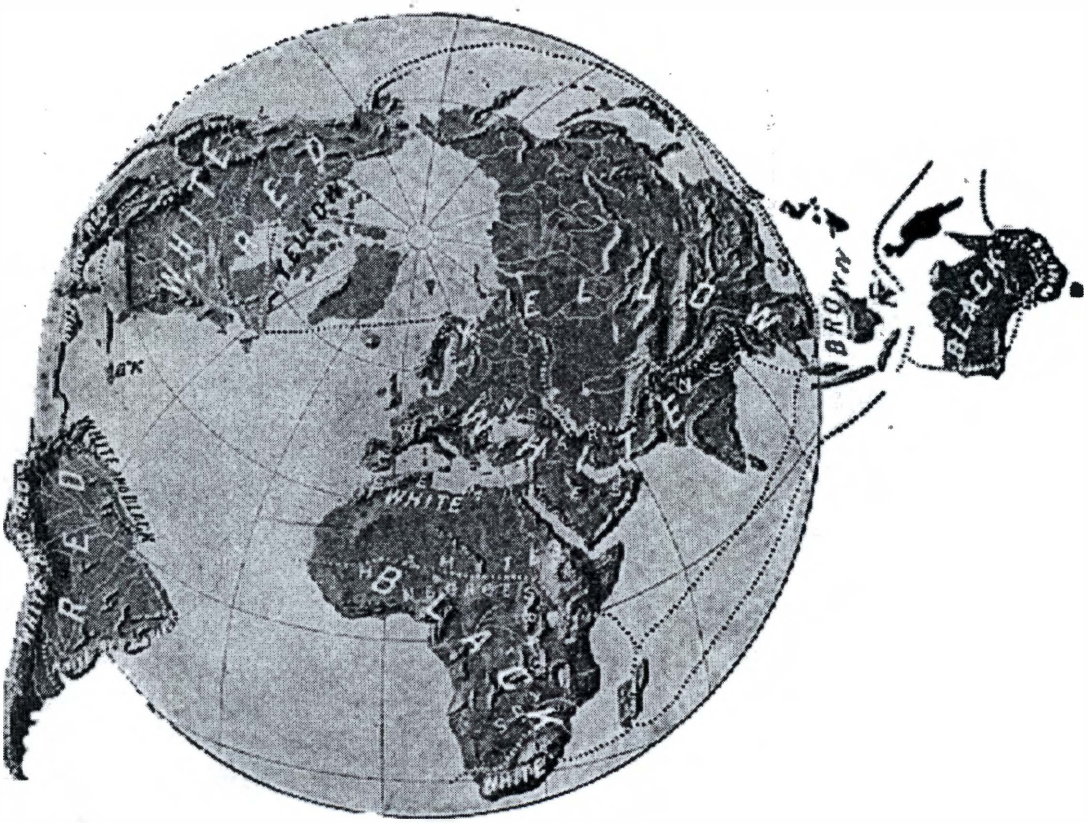


Figure 7.36. Homes of the races

Figure 7.37. Hottentot hut

frequently move in search of grazing land for their livestock and that this is why they live in tents, the author intimates the "Hottentots" are somehow deficient, particularly when he claims:

> Many white people have now settled in southern Africa. These have taught the tribes near them how to make better homes and to use better weapons. Other tribes still live in their wild state.

Although Frye goes into greater detail to describe the "black race," he reinforces the constructed white superiority present in earlier geography schoolbooks.

Redway and Hinman completely exclude the white race in their depiction of "Homes of the Races of Mankind," but include written descriptions and visual images of the additional four constructed racial types. Redway and Hinman describe the physical features assigned to each race to reinforce the subordinate status of non-white cultures both at home and abroad. Their example of Africans and African Americans clearly demonstrates the construction of the "other." Redway and Hinman carefully illustrate the "difference" between blacks in Africa and the United States. African Americans wearing Western attire stand outside a building constructed of logs (see Figure 7.38). The woman and man both appear forlorn and destitute. The authors claim, "Negroes have been living in this country so long that those we see here have learned to speak and dress and live much as the white men do (Redway and Hinman 1897, 13)." Even the written text conveys that blacks are better off now that they have adopted white ways. Redway and Hinman (1897, 13) reinforce the supposed savage state of Africans: "The first negroes who were brought to America were ignorant savages, and many of the negroes in Africa

Figure 7.38. Negroes in our country

are still savages" (see Figure 7.39). Here, a woman, holding a child, sits on the ground rather than on a chair as in the previous visual image. The background setting and her clothing somehow imply a perpetual state of backwardness that could only be overcome by adopting Western ways.

These authors typically divide Africa into north and south. They explain how whites inhabit the land north of the Sahara while blacks reside south of the desert (Colton 1882, 77; *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* 1883, 73; Hall 1885, 89; Frye 1894, 100; Redway and Hinman 1897, 126). Colton (1882, 77) states, blacks in Africa "are in a savage and degraded condition." Hall goes into detail confusing her readers. She claims these people are ignorant, wear little clothing (a sign of savagery in these books), and build inadequate housing, yet she explains how in ancient times these same people built magnificent architectural structures. Of course, she is describing ancient Egypt in its former splendor, but a place that, according to Hall, has now fallen into disrepair and powerlessness.

In a later discussion of Africa, Hall (1885, 89) reinforces the "savage" state granted Africans when she states:

> The negroes have never learned to build cities or vessels; and have neither schools, books, churches, nor factories. They are still ignorant and savage, and live in little huts of mud, or in caves.

With such a characterization, students reading Hall's book could hardly argue against the exploitation of Africans by white people. Hall goes to great lengths to justify the unequal trade practices concerning ivory. She explains how some Africans hunt elephants for

Figure 7.39. Negroes in Africa

their ivory tusks and that valued objects are made from them and are cherished by privileged white consumers in the United States. Hall (1885, 89) purports:

> It is from these tusks that our ivory articles are made; and therefore they are worth a great deal of money in our countries: but traders only give the negroes glass beads, a little calico, and other trifles for them; which is a fair bargain, for the ivory is of no use to the negroes, while they are delighted to get what seems very trifling to us.

Perhaps a witty nineteenth century reader reversed the scenario for Hall suggesting ivory as the trifle and the objects of trade as valuable. The constructed value of objects here, for Hall, determines the relative status of civilization.

Equally pernicious is Redway and Hinman's (1897, 127) description of people living in Africa:

> The negroes are fond of dancing and of music which is often harsh and disagreeable to white people. Some tribes are so fond of ornaments, that it is common to see a negro with his nostrils or lips pierced and ornaments fastened in the holes. Many of them grease and paint their bodies, and wear little or no clothing.

The authors construct Africans as bizarre oddities. Without addressing varying conceptions of beauty and symbols of power, Redway and Hinman degrade people in Africa as annoying adolescents in need of the civilizing effects of exposure to "proper," white ways.

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, geography schoolbook authors comment that blacks in the United States are descendants of Africans and that they live primarily in the South. Three of the schoolbooks address slavery in the United States as something in the distant past, and the authors, typically, blame Africans

themselves for the institution of slavery. Furthermore, Liberia continues to be a popular subject as black separatism remains a solution for attempting to maintain a homogeneous, white nation.

Like the geography schoolbooks analyzed in the preceding chapters, these authors treat slavery as an institution particular to the South. Colton (1882, 42), in his description of the southern states, says:

> A large part of the population consists of the freedmen, who, until 1862, were held as slaves. Very many schools have been established for their instruction; and education, in most parts, is making considerable progress.

Despite their former enslaved status, blacks in the United States, according to Colton, are benevolently provided a formal education. What Colton fails to tell his readers is that often black Americans themselves established educational systems for ex-slaves. James D. Anderson (1988) provides a detailed documentation of black education in the South from Reconstruction through the 1960s, crediting the ex-slaves for their struggle for universal education. Furthermore, slavery was not abolished until 1865 with the ratification of the thirteenth amendment even though Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863.

Frye (1894, 69), like Redway and Hinman (see the section in this chapter titled "Women's work" for a quote from Redway and Hinman concerning slavery in the South), declares the contributions of slave labor justify the institution itself:

> A long time ago, many black people from Africa were sold as slaves in the United States. Their labor proved most helpful in the cotton fields of the South. At length all the slaves were set free, and

> most of them made their homes on the Southern plains where they had worked.

The quotes from both Frye's and Redway and Hinman's schoolbook confine slavery to the South and touch on share cropping without acknowledging the creation of a crop-lien system barely removed from slavery, yet disguised as free labor. Furthermore, the repetitive depiction of African Americans picking cotton insinuates this was their only contribution to local and global economies (see Figures 7.17, 7.18, and 7.19). The roles of black men and women in domestic and institutional service, manual labor (beyond picking cotton), the family, church, community, and school are seldom, if ever, addressed by these authors.

The authors repeatedly blame Africans themselves for slavery, but never address the economic incentives for selling captured enemies to Western countries. Colton and Hall mention that tribes in Africa sell the captives resulting from constant battles. Only Redway and Hinman (1897, 129) inform the reader that the practice is in decline in Africa following a pattern previously established by Europe and the United States:

> Slavery still exists in some parts of Africa, in parts of Asia, and in European Turkey. In the rest of Europe and in America it is no longer permitted. Thousands of men, women, and children in central Africa have been torn from their families and sold into slavery. The slave trade has been stopped in most parts of Africa.

This is the only acknowledgment in this selection of geography schoolbooks of women and children sold as slaves, yet Redway and Hinman direct the reader's attention to Africa rather than the United States or Europe. Admitting that men, women, and children

were "torn from their families" in the United States and sold as slaves would shatter the construction of the benevolent, yet slave owning white men.

Four of the five geography schoolbooks analyzed here include a brief mention of Liberia. The nineteenth century separatist urge remains strong and Liberia is seen as a solution for the settlement of the former slaves. Colton (1882, 78) explains Liberia was originally established as a "colony" of the United States in order to provide a home for freed blacks. Frye and Redway and Hinman surmise a similar description. Hall (1885, 89), on the other hand, emphasizes the generosity of the former slave owners for establishing such a place in the hopes of uplifting the black race:

> Liberia [is] where people in America have sent freed negroes, and given to each a bit of ground to cultivate, hoping that they would improve themselves, and help to civilize the ignorant negroes in the neighborhood. Missionaries have gone there to live, and have found schools and churches for them. They have made considerable progress, and have now a government something like ours.

She completely credits "benevolent" whites rather than acknowledging the work of the formerly enslaved laborers for their own progress, which, for Hall, means adopting white ways. None of the authors address the hardships faced by former slaves living in Liberia; from their previous roles as slaves, the actual journey to Liberia, and, then, their status as outsiders displacing natives in West Africa.

Geography schoolbooks published in the 1880s and 1890s do not condemn slavery like the books from the first three decades of the nineteenth century. Nor do they neglect blacks living in the United States as do the schoolbooks published between 1832 and 1874. Stereotypes abound and racism persists as these authors marginalize African

Americans. Constructed as victims of their native cultures, blacks living in the United States, according to these authors, have progressed beyond their counterparts in Africa because of the white influence on their lives. Moreover, the prosperity of the country resulting from slave labor, share cropping, and the numerous tasks performed by black Americans goes unmentioned by these authors. To recognize the strong economic foundation based on such labor would dismantle the construction of white men and women living in the United States as industrious and enterprising.

Categorizations of people belonging to the "yellow race" now expand beyond people in China and Japan. Colton (1882, 16) asserts:

> The **Yellow Race** includes the people of some other countries besides China. The Japanese belong to this race. They are a curious-looking people; for their faces are so broad, their cheek-bones so high, and their eyes are small and slanting (emphasis original).

Frye (1894, 41) includes "Arctic people of the yellow race," and he describes the inhabitants of Lapland, yet his characterization confirms the nebulousness of racial categories (see Figure 7.40):

> Come out, little boy, where we can see you. What large round eyes you have, and what a tiny flat nose! Your eyes are as straight as ours, but your face tells us that you are one of the little yellow people. Your sister, who is holding a dipper, has dark hair, but yours is light.

The ridiculously condescending text makes the visual illustration problematic. The precise demarcation of racial classifications obviously failed Frye. Graduating into and intersecting one another, racial types were not constant despite the author's efforts to exhibit distinct examples of race. Since the people themselves are not easily classified,

Figure 7.40. A Lapland home

according to race, the visual works to reinforce the subordinate status of people obviously different (deficient) from the standardized white inhabitant of the United States.

Frye also includes Inuit in his "Arctic people of the yellow race." Like Tibbu in Africa, a young boy named Chuglu is the protagonist in Frye's discussion of the north coast of North America and Greenland (see Figure 7.25). Frye includes another visual of an Inuit child inset at the bottom left of the picture of Chuglu (see Figure 7.41). In a footnote, Frye (1894, 42) authenticates his interpretation of Inuit culture or, at least, his choice of names for the characters in his narrative:

> Chuglu was one of the Eskimos at the World's Fair in Chicago. The baby, Columbia, was born on the World's Fair grounds.

John Willinsky (1998, 76) reminds us that the enthusiasm for and popularity of international exhibitions in the late nineteenth century United States "replicated the racial divisions so central to what imperialism made of the world." The privileged citizens of the United States witnessed the spectacle of the European empire they believed they were now heir to. These spectacles displayed the industrial achievement of the West and colonized "others"; they celebrated the ascension of civilization over savagery. Intended as lessons in anthropology, such exhibitions reinforced distance, difference, and white superiority. In his essay on the Columbian Exposition, Curtis M. Hinsley (1991, 357) asserts, "It seems clear that the central problem of the exposition as a psychological construction of white Americans was to determine distances and relative placement between peoples, physically and ideologically." Hinsley's analysis of the fair as a site of touristic consumption even includes the Eskimo village where, most likely, Chuglu and his family were on display. While not quite the age of globalization, these expositions

Figure 7.41. Columbia

brought the world to the United States and Europe. Elaborate, complex cultures were reduced to simplified spectacles intended to enhance the feeling of racial, cultural, and material superiority of the voyeur.

By the late nineteenth century, immigrants from Asia increased from approximately 40,000 in 1860 to 100,000 in 1880 (Dinnerstein and Reimers 1999, 74). Despite the mid century praise for the imported laborers, derogatory characterizations soon followed. The Chinese were perceived as depressing wages and the Japanese were deemed a threat because of their increasing world power. Within the nineteenth century social context of the United States, these authors constructed the Japanese and Chinese as bizarre oddities in order to further perpetuate their assigned "otherness."

Frye includes descriptions of Japanese people, the most common standard for the constructed "yellow race." Frye (1894, 38) describes the physical features of Japanese children:

> The girls and boys of Japan have round faces, bright black eyes and pearly teeth. They often have ruddy cheeks, though their skin in brownish yellow.

The emphasis on children suggests Frye is trying to connect with the young readers of his book, yet it really demeans the cultural group he is describing, thus infantilizing Japanese people in general. Furthermore, Frye's paternalistic condescending tone continues with written text about the sleeping girls in Figure 7.42. Frye (1894, 39) asks:

> Isn't this a queer bed? Would you like to crawl into one of the wadded quilts, and rest your head upon the wooden pillow? This girl will soon wake and drink a cup of tea. Can you see the little tea set in the tray on the floor?

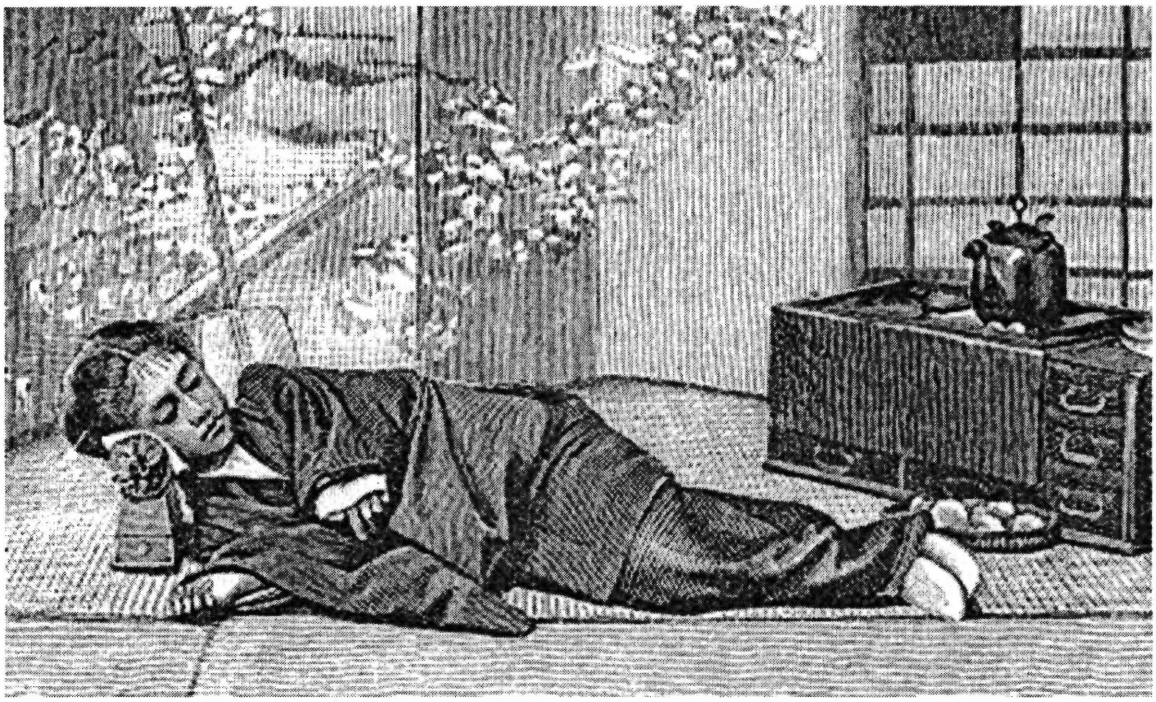

Figure 7.42. Sleeping Japanese girl

Without providing more detailed information, Frye exoticizes and "others" this young woman by accentuating difference.

Redway and Hinman also tell the reader that there are Chinese people living in the United States. The authors depict these people assigned to the "yellow" or "Mongolian" race as laundrymen (see Figure 7.43). The visual image works to reinforce the written description where Redway and Hinman (1897, 14) say:

> They have yellowish skin, and slanting, almond-shaped eyes, and each of them wears his hair in along braid. They dress in a manner that seems odd to us, wearing loose jackets and queer shoes, and many of those living here are laundrymen.

Lee Chew (quoted in Takaki 1998, 133-138) ponders the stereotype of the Chinese laundryman as he himself fulfilled this role upon his immigration to the United States. He explains that women not men in China wash clothes and "All the Chinese laundrymen here were taught in the first place by American women just as I was taught (Takaki 1998, 135)." Furthermore, according to Chew, many Chinese enter the laundry business because it requires little initial capital and there are few alternatives because of prejudice. While the authors acknowledge Chinese and their descendants living in the United States, the constructed representations stigmatize and "other" by accentuating difference; the Chinese become curious oddities.

Redway and Hinman (1897, 63) also relay that, "There are more Chinamen in San Francisco than in any other city in the United States." Fifty-four pages later, in their summary of China, they explain that many Chinese came to the United States as laborers, "But we did not like them, and our laws do not now permit Chinese laborers to come to the United States (Redway and Hinman 1897, 117)." With the authority of schoolbook

Figure 7.43. A Chinese laundry

authors, Redway and Hinman suggest that students using their textbook should also dislike Chinese people. The anti-Chinese sentiment in the United States stemmed from racism based on constructed cultural differences, and resulted in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (Dinnerstein and Reimers 1999, 74).

Hall and Frye also discuss Chinese immigrants. Hall (1885, 112) mentions the 1849 California gold rush, "Men hurried there from all the States; and besides our own people, English, French, Germans, and even Chinese, went in crowds." In this one sentence, Hall marginalizes the Chinese twice: first, when she distinguishes "our" people from what we may presume is "their" people, and, second, when she uses "even" as an intensive to emphasize the unlikely or unusual occurrence of Chinese people residing in the United States. Frye (1894, 53), on the other hand, simply states, "Then there are thousands of Indians and Chinese living in this country."

The authors typically describe the "Malay" or "brown" race in less detail than the other three non-white races. The characterizations while condescending provide little more than a description of physical features (see Figure 7.44). A young woman wearing a tunic-like dress wrapped around her body carries goods on her head. As though interrupted from performing her daily tasks, a photographer captures an image of this woman. Unlike the characters in the visual representations of the "black" and "yellow" races, this person has a background of lush vegetation suggestive of the world in which she lives. Perhaps, for the authors, a lone female required little discussion; she alone provides enough information for the authors to "other" her as they reinforce her marginalized status as a non-white woman.

Figure 7.44. A Malay girl

In one and a half pages, Frye uses the diminutive "little" seven times when describing "Malay or Brown People." Perhaps it is an attempt to endear the reader to the subject, yet it suggests these people need help, as if they are children. Frye includes two visuals of young Malays (see Figure 7.45). He begins, "Perhaps you think that this is a little Negro girl, but she is not. Her skin is light brown, and her hair is long and straight (Frye 1894, 45)." Frye (1894, 46) concludes his description of Malay life:

> In some places the Malays have built cities, but the white man rules over most of the brown race. Many of the Malays are savages, like the people in the black tribes of Africa.

Their inherently savage nature requires taming through exposure to "civilized" cultures, thus Frye blatantly justifies colonization and imperialism. The "brown race or Malays" are summed up by Colton (1882, 16) in one sentence, "They are a fierce-looking people, having flat faces and long, dark, coarse hair."

American Indians, who belong to the "red race," are doomed to extinction for not adopting white ways, according to Colton (1882, 16):

> These are a bold, warlike people; but they are fast disappearing before the spread of the white settlements; for they do not like to cultivate the ground, or live in cities or towns, like the white race, preferring their own wild savage life and their rude wigwams or tents.

Colton, again, reiterates his racialized characterizations later in his book, thus reinforcing five distinct categories of humans. He repeats descriptions of physical features and tells the reader to refer back to page fifteen to view the picture.

Another example of how white men and women in the United States were encouraged to think of themselves as the in group by "othering" non-white people in the

Figure 7.45. A Malay girl and boy

United States is the illustration labeled "An Indian encampment" from Redway and Hinman's book (see Figure 7.46). The image is ethnographically quite accurate and faithful to the material culture of the plains Indians, yet the stoic male is stereotypical of the men of the plains. The woman, wearing a trade blanket over her shoulders, holds a child secured in a cradle board. The mother and child represent the love and nurturing symbolic of woman's proper role, yet the stoic male suggests a stagnant savage firmly resisting change. The written text reinforces the supposedly less than civilized status of Native Americans upon the arrival of white men. By describing their physical features, temporary lodges, little clothing, and leisurely pastimes, Redway and Hinman construct American Indians as frozen in time. Perpetually kept in the past, the authors construct Native Americans as less threatening at the same time they justify such (mis)representations.

Redway and Hinman provide a typical contradictory treatment of Native Americans. The authors claim, "The white people who settled our country were civilized when they came from Europe and conquered the savage inhabitants whom they found here (Redway and Hinman 1897, 91-92)." The inherent savage cruelty possessed by Native Americans also surfaces in Redway and Hinman's discussion of the westward migration for gold. While white men were journeying across the United States, Redway and Hinman (1897, 35) tell us, "Many were killed by the Indians." While the authors insist on the savagery of Native Americans, they also report the agricultural ingenuity of American Indians. Redway and Hinman explain how Native Americans set fire to grass on the plains to spur new growth. So, the authors continue to depict American Indians as

Figure 7.46. An Indian encampment

savages despite their creative methods mentioned by the authors, thus placing them outside the homogeneously represented United States.

Frye does not describe the physical appearance of American Indians or the "red race," but he does describe various types of dwellings and how Native Americans drum and dance around evening fires. Frye's (1894, 38) treatment perpetuates the noble savage myth of American Indians, and is condescending:

> The red-brown man taught the white man how to make canoes of birch bark, and shoes of soft deerskin. The dusky savage also showed the paleface how to make corn grow in a forest.

So, while Frye acknowledges Native American contributions to white cultures in the United States, he does so in a patronizing manner.

The late nineteenth century witnessed the completion of the railroad in the West which, in turn, displaced many Native Americans. Following the 1871 Indian Appropriation Act, railroad companies more easily obtained Indian lands (Takaki 2000, 174). Underscored by notions of white supremacy, Native Americans were deemed a threat to the industrial progress of the United States. Established in 1887, the Dawes Act allowed the president to allot specific land to Indians without their consent and further granted them citizenship if they conceded their former "savage" lifestyles (Takaki 2000, 189). Civilization and assimilation of Native Americans was to enhance the technological and capitalist society of the United States. If not, American Indians would vanish into the past as relics of their lack of progress.

These authors devote less attention to Native Americans than their predecessors although they often grant the Indians seemingly more desirous characteristics than other

non-white cultures because they were the original inhabitants of the United States. These geography schoolbook authors continue to construct American Indians as savages in need of civilizing. Colton describes some Native Americans as partly civilized because they cultivate the ground and have permanent housing. Conversely, Colton (1882, 51) claims, "The tribe called the Apaches are very savage, and commit dreadful cruelties on the settlers."

All of the authors discuss land established by the United States government for American Indians suggesting white settlers have justly treated Native Americans. The author of *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* (1883, 32) begins even earlier with descriptions of friendly interactions between American Indians and white settlers, "They [the Quakers] bought the land from the Indians, with whom they lived on terms of friendship." Construed as support for fair dealings with Indians, the nineteenth century reader may question the need for separate Indian territory.

Hall, like many of these authors, blames Native Americans for their westward migration and demise. She explains that American Indians moved west in search of new hunting grounds. Moreover, according to Hall (1885, 102), "They do not like to live in towns; though a few tribes have learned to live like white people." Frye (1894, 128) similarly states, "Some of the Indians have good houses and schools, and live in towns like those of the white men." Acculturation of white ways is requisite for progressing up the constructed hierarchy of civilization.

Descriptions of people in Mexico and Central and South America using racialized classifications further correspond to a constructed hierarchy of civilization, yet such characterizations really problematize constructions of race. Colton (1882, 53) tells

us the inhabitants of Mexico "are partly of Spanish origin," but that there are also many "negroes and Indians." But according to *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* (1883, 59), inhabitants of Mexico are either "Indians or white of Spanish descent." Derogatory characterizations riddle Hall's descriptions of Spanish conquerors and native Mexicans. Hall portrays the Spanish as greedy and bloodthirsty, yet civilized and culturally advanced in comparison to the native Mexicans. She depicts Mexicans as ignorant savages, yet amazingly advanced because of their already established kingdom despite their assigned race. She condescends, "The Mexicans have never been able to govern themselves well" and "there is not much improvement from year to year (Hall 1885, 98-99)." Her message of insufficient self-governance would, perhaps, ring clear to students reading her book, "The Mexicans do not care as much for schools as we do, and the children know very little about other lands (Hall 1885, 99)."

Authors of geography schoolbooks published in the 1890s claim that Indians in Mexico and Central America are more culturally advanced than those in North America. Frye, in his geography schoolbook, says that many people in Mexico and Central America are Indians and that any white people there are of Spanish descent. He further claims, "The Indians of Mexico were more intelligent than those in parts of North America (Frye 1894, 56)." With this last statement, Frye justifies the cruel treatment of Native Americans because of their supposed lack of intelligence. Had North American Indians been more like their southern counterparts, perhaps assimilation into dominant white culture would have been easier or even successful. Redway and Hinman claim that more Indians lived in Mexico and Central America than in North America, and that these

Indians were not as savage as those to the north. Furthermore, according to Redway and Hinman (1897, 69):

> Many of the Spanish settlers married Indian women, and their children were half-breeds. Most of the people now are half-breeds and partly civilized Indians. The white Mexicans and a few of the half-breeds own most of the land and are rich and powerful, but the Indians and most of the half-breeds are poor, ignorant, and wretched. They are the laborers on the farms and in the mines, and are little better off than slaves. Their houses are often wretched hovels (see Figure 7.47).

The situation for the poor in Mexico, described by the authors, looks similar to that of the African Americans pictured in Figure 7.38, and sounds much like share cropping in the United States although these authors would never draw such a connection. The author's depiction of people in Mexico and Central America attests to the inadequacies of "scientific" classifications such as race. Although condescending and derogatory, their description attests to the nebulousness of identifying people according to supposed immutable, inherent traits.

The authors also degrade South America and its inhabitants because of the acknowledged racial heterogeneity. In South America, there are "Whites, Negroes, and Indians," and Colton (1882, 57), like the author of *The Eclectic Elementary Geography* carefully emphasizes that, "The Whites are chiefly of Spanish or Portuguese origin," but "The Indians are descendants of the original population, and are mostly in an uncivilized condition." Frye (1894, 81) purports that, "In South America the white men took lands from the Indians, and founded colonies, all of which, except in Guiana, in time became free and formed countries." He further conveys that the white population in South

Figure 7.47. Wretched hovels

America is of Spanish descent, except in Brazil where people are mostly of Portuguese descent. Moreover, Frye tells his readers that the white people in Guiana are British, French, and Dutch. The author's commentary highlights the colonizing endeavors by the aforementioned European nations rather "objectively," yet his description disguises imperialistic acts committed by the privileged in the United States. Instead of acknowledging the intentional marginalizing of Native Americans, African Americans, and other non-white people in the United States, Frye emphasizes colonization by Europeans.

Like the previous authors, Redway and Hinman (1897, 77) report, that in South America, some of the Indians, the Incas in particular, were "partly civilized," but most were "wild savages." The authors also contend that the white people in South America are descendants of Spanish fortune-seekers who colonized much of South America. Like Frye, Redway and Hinman use the derogatory label "half-breed" to describe people of mixed Spanish and Indian ancestry. Because of the numerous Indians, half-breeds, and Catholic Spanish whites, the reader is not surprised that the authors represent Mexico and Central and South America as lagging behind North America and the United States specifically in "progress" and "civilization." Again, nineteenth century geography schoolbook authors worked to boost the image of white men and women living in the United States by degrading a variety of cultures at both home and abroad. Moreover, "othering" the numerous cultural groups in Mexico and Central and South America bolstered the image of men and women living in the United States at the same time it justified the annexation of much of Mexico to the United States.

Frye is the only author to directly address the socially constructed white race. In his discussion of the "white race," Frye (1894, 47) describes Arabs as a "dark branch of the white race." The description accompanying the visual image "Arab school" reinforces difference as a deficiency as Frye (1894, 47) exoticizes Arabs (see Figure 7.48):

> Would you like to go to school with these Arab boys? They are reading the Koran, which is their Bible. Listen to the strange words which tell them not to press wine from grapes. In all this fair land no wine is made, but grapes are eaten. The Arab boys are dark, but they belong to the white race. Have you not seen boys that look like these?

Because of their religion and skin tone, these boys represent the "other."

Additional white people described by Frye are those in Holland and Switzerland, but he never reports their physical features and skin color. Instead, Frye relates the surface of the landscape, delineating life in the lowlands and highlands. His intentional neglect of white people in the United States infers they are the pinnacle of civilization. Frye assumes his readers are white, middle-class, Protestants born in the United States, thus no description of their physical features or customs is necessary. But the exclusion really reinforces the ethnocentrism of nineteenth century geography schoolbooks.

Geography schoolbook authors in the last two decades of the nineteenth century worked diligently to maintain a homogenized national identity. Following the white, middle-class, Protestant, masculinist identity previously constructed, these authors continue to degrade numerous people both at home and abroad. The rapidly changing landscape of the United States makes the pages of these books, but the people actually

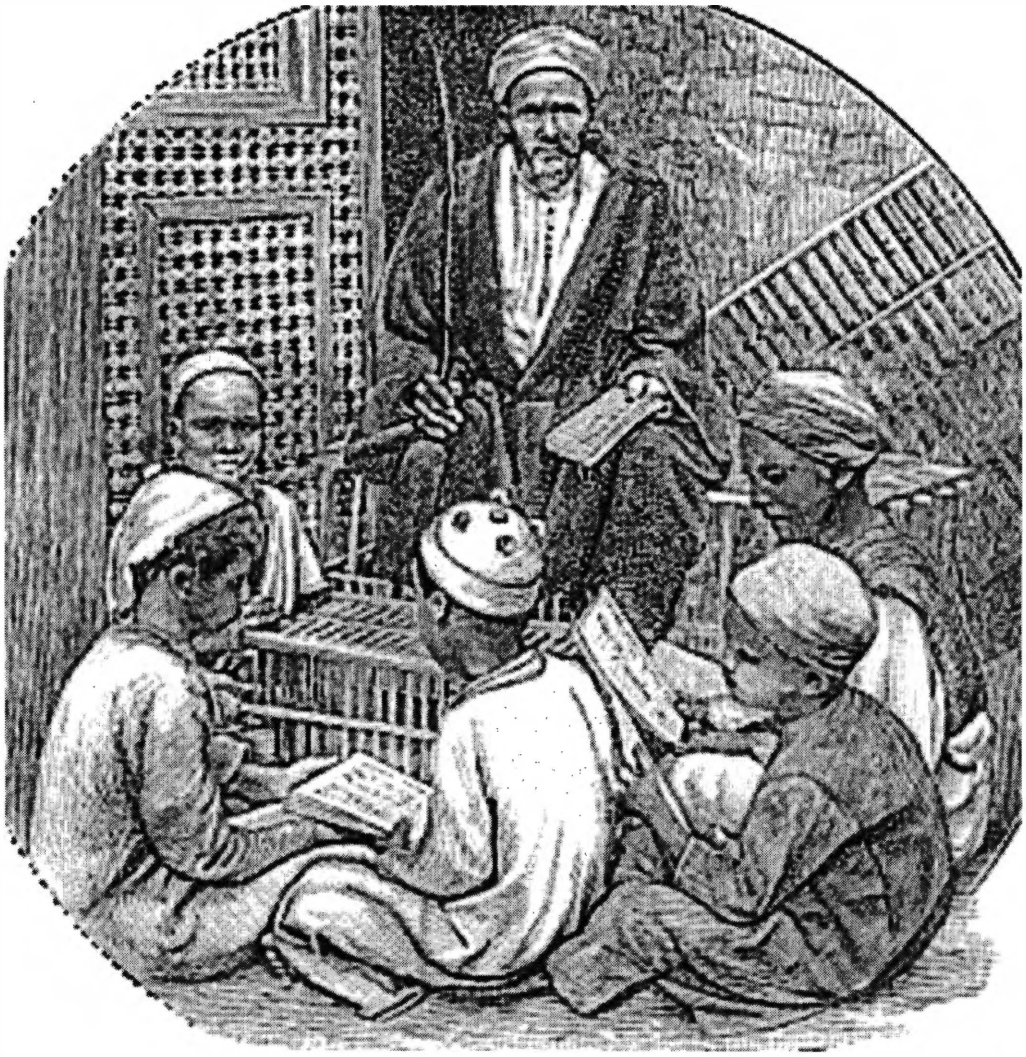

Figure 7.48. Arab school

performing the labor are marginalized. While religious overtones lessen during the 1880s and 1890s, a Protestant ethos remains. Women's work is increasingly recognized, yet it continues to be relegated lower status than men's work. Constructions of race abound in these books, and they are no less racist than previous constructions despite changing historical circumstances. The authors' writings reflect, in large part, racist and sexist attitudes that continue through the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. As the political, economic, social, and cultural contexts change, so do hegemonizing motives.

# CHAPTER 8
# CONCLUSION

## National identity

Over the course of the nineteenth century, geography schoolbooks changed dramatically, yet they continued to maintain the same overall message—a national identity constructed according to a defined ideal. A white, middle-class, Protestant, masculinist view of the United States and the world beyond, marginalized and, at times, erased a more complex set of identities that in actuality allowed the United States to become the rich, powerful nation that it is. Despite torture, abuse, and exploitation, non-white men and women, non-Protestants, and the laboring classes from non-European origins, contributed to the nation, but were overlooked in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks and remain largely ignored or denied in the larger society today. In their attempts to persuade the student of the superiority of the United States, these authors depict the United States as apart from its global setting; they fail to provide the full context of the United States. The authors themselves were captives of the illusion generated on a larger scale: The United States is (or should be) peopled by a virtuous, moral citizenry (white, middle-class, Protestant, men, and women, only if the latter conform to and accept their proper roles). This overwhelmingly conservative view of the nation reflects the historical context: Those with the power to authorize a particular version of reality vehemently protected their privilege by deeming it natural, normal, essential.

These nineteenth century geography schoolbook authors constructed a unified, homogeneous national identity by emphasizing and exaggerating difference. Through

visual and written representations, the nation's members could see specifically who they were and who they were not. As James Blaut (1993, 27) so aptly explains, Europe was deemed the epitome of civilization both historically and geographically. From Europe, progress and innovation were diffused to the rest of the world. At the onset of the founding of the United States, the new nation emulated Europe, but soon regarded itself as the center of the universe, the new point from which information and capital would colonize the world. Thus, the constructed national identity, formulated according to a hierarchy of differences, justified the pernicious treatment of anyone who fell outside the conceived ideal. My analysis of the construction of identity in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks published in the United States deconstructs fabrications that have done so much to valorize the nation.

## Education and nation building

Educational authorities for much of the nineteenth century made no pretense of neutrality. Despite a century of tremendous change, there was little or no deviation from the basic values advanced in geography schoolbooks. Considerable research devoted to analyzing the connection between education (including textbooks) and nationalism provides a wealth of support for this dissertation (Anderson 1991; Apple 1993; Blaut 1993; Elson 1964; Ploszajska 1999; Said 1978; Schulten 2001; Willinsky 1998; White 1978). Public education systems in the United States cannot be isolated from the larger social contexts in which they operate. Purposes of education, policy, and curriculum have always reflected the larger national projects of the United States; influenced by and reacting to political, social, cultural, and economic forces, schools can easily disseminate a specific ideology. In regards to "Eurocentric diffusionsim" (the spread of progress and

innovation from the pinnacle of Europe outward to the rest of the world), Blaut's (1993, 6) statement demonstrates the impact and importance of schoolbooks as instruments that are the creation of the opinion-forming elite and as such are a window into the unspoken assumptions of the culture. While students may or may not accept messages conveyed in schoolbooks, the books themselves reflect a particular version of reality constructed for specific purposes and audiences. The ideal national identity perpetuated in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks demonstrates clearly for students who they should be, how they should act, and who they should regard as "others." Ruth Miller Elson (1964, 341) regards the conservative overtones of nineteenth century schoolbooks as congruent with the authors' project of presenting the world, "Ironically their very efforts to present a united society prevent these schoolbooks from mirroring America as a whole; only the social ideals of the more conservative members of the society were offered the nineteenth century child." I agree that such a presentation purposely conveys and reinforces constructed hierarchies of difference (or deficiencies). While I have addressed the historical construction of identity, I would argue, as does John Willinsky (1998, 259) that such a project has contemporary implications, "What needs to be made clear is that, as the schools have contributed to racialized [gendered, classed, religioned] identities, so they need to be engaged in study of their own historical constructions." Hence, we are obligated to investigate historic constructions as they set precedence for current and future constructions. What is represented in the past speaks to future generations about origins, interactions, and ways of knowing the world.

## Representations and images

Nineteenth century geography schoolbooks supplied students with ready-made representations of the world. Through visual images and written descriptions, authors conveyed a particular version of reality for the student to make their own. Both Tamar Mayer (1999, 4) and Susan Schulten (2001, 239) explain how symbols and representations accumulate power over time. If left unchallenged, these repeated images become normalized through their consistency. Representations as such are highly problematic in that they depend on those constructing the representations instead of those represented. Representations tend to essentialize, normalize, and standardize the object/subject portrayed even though we now know there is nothing inherently natural about representations. Edward Said (1978, 54) reminds us that, "There is always a measure of the purely arbitrary in the way the distinctions between things are seen." The messages, meanings, and values conveyed through representations reveal the worldview held by the person constructing the representations. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1994, 70) clearly articulates the subtleties of representation as "speaking for" or "re-presentation." The former relates to politics, state formation, and law while the latter is more specific to depictions in art or philosophy where there is a theoretical subject. Both representations suggest substitution but the latter has a stronger sense of substitution. Spivak's "re-presentation" reflects the substitution taking place in identity construction in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks in the process of identity construction. Rather than active subjects, people in these books are passive objects presented for the voyeur's inspection. They have been neatly identified, categorized, and displayed as if they were dusty specimens in a glass display case. This orderly collection

and organized exhibition of the "other" is not confined to nineteenth century geography schoolbooks, but is part of the much larger imperialist project of ordering the world. To ensure Western superiority, culturally, politically, and economically, both Europe and the United States worked to define the world on their own terms as to convey their propriety over it. They could display their pillaged booty to the entire world as evidence of their natural superiority.

## Exceptions and contradictions

Although an ideal white, middle-class, Protestant, masculinist identity was presented in nineteenth century geography schoolbooks as the model for emulation, there are several points that need to be made. Elson (1964, 340) claims, "contemporary problems are conspicuously absent" in nineteenth century schoolbooks. The divisiveness of class, religion, gender, and race issues are ignored by the authors according to Elson. The authors' construct the United States as a mythical, nostalgic, fantasy land where social disharmony has succumbed to rational order, and I agree that the authors downplay and, at times, completely overlook the complexity of characters that make up the United States and the world beyond. Their (mis)representations are often offensive, but the books do convey a version of reality. And, the life experience of the students reading these books may have very well contradicted the messages conveyed by the authors.

Socio-economic class divisions and labor unrest, although absent from nineteenth century geography schoolbooks, would be obvious to many students reading these books. Religious intolerance is clearly articulated in these schoolbooks, and the nineteenth century student would be well aware of such animosity if they lived in a religiously diverse neighborhood. Racist attitudes flow through the pages of these books as it did

much of society in the nineteenth century United States. Even the representations of women in these books convey a certain reality.

I intentionally included two schoolbooks authored by women to see, if somehow, their own identities would impact their representations of men and women. Despite my biased assumption, these female authors' constructions were no less classist, racist, and sexist. But, again, we must remind ourselves that this is a version of reality in the nineteenth century United States. The women who wrote some of these books were not themselves allowed to vote. For the most part, women across the globe were involved in the work they are shown in these books. The major occupations for women outside the home in the nineteenth century United States included domestic service (330,000), clothing manufacture (62,000), cotton textile production (59,000), and teaching (55,000) (Lebergott 1964, 520). Despite the simplistic and misleading representations of people in these books, a particular reality was conveyed. Furthermore, these authors were trying to teach what it meant to be an "American" at the same time the nation was trying to define for itself just what that meant.

## Difference without deficiency

Current efforts to recognize differences between varying and shifting identities without oppressive hierarchies inform this dissertation in an effort to deconstruct nineteenth century nation building in the United States. Cultural studies, critical feminism, whiteness studies, and anti-racism advocates stress the need to recognize differences, but these acknowledgements of difference fundamentally challenge difference as it was constructed and emphasized in nineteenth century geography

schoolbooks. Postmodern efforts to recognize and value diversity have led to the dismantling of essentialized categories invoked as a basis for oppression.

Authors of nineteenth century geography schoolbooks conveyed differences in order to exoticize and "other" people who were conceived as somehow deficient in comparison to the ideally constructed resident of the United States. Audrey Kobayashi (1997, 3) succinctly describes this process of "othering," "The concept of difference allows the social creation of categories of people subordinate to a dominant norm, and allows the continuation of cultural practices that reinscribe difference as differential values placed upon human life." In these schoolbooks, only white, middle-class, Protestant men and women were deemed moral and virtuous; they were presented as the epitome of progress, as a standard for comparison and emulation. In order to achieve any level of respectability, people had to assume this narrow identity and act accordingly. This narrowly constructed identity marginalized large numbers of people in the United States despite their contributions to the prosperity of the nation. This identity also exoticized people around the world in order to bolster the self-image of the United States. Through the constructed "other," the already privileged could see what they were not. The socially constructed identity in these schoolbooks was based on the "scientific" evidence of the time. Racism and sexism were infused with a Eurocentrism meant to enhance Western, white, paternalistic superiority, but as Blaut (1993, 2) elucidates, "the belief in Eurocentric diffusionism and Europe's historical superiority or priority is not convincing: not well grounded in the facts of history and geography, although firmly grounded in Western culture." Hence, the need to analyze the process of "differencing"

is crucial in attempts to recognize difference as valued diversity rather than oppressive deficiency.

Contemporary advocates stressing the need to recognize difference have re-conceptualized difference in a number of ways. Kobayashi (1997, 6), for example, encourages "diversity," "Difference is a fact and diversity a passionate hope." French philosopher, Jacques Derrida (1976) invokes "différance" to assert that textual meaning is always already unstable; that the possibility of meaning is always deferred. Using Derrida's example from language, words are definable by other words which, in turn, are defined by other words, and so on. For Kobayashi, Derrida, and others, meaning is never fixed, but is dependent on context. Context supplies the information necessary to understand differences without artificial dichotomies and implications of superiority.

While this is not intended to be a debate over semantics, I would argue the importance of language. *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (1993) includes five definitions of difference: "the quality or state of being different," "distinction or discrimination in preference," "disagreement in opinion," "the degree by which things differ in quantity," and "a significant change in a situation." Within variations of the first definition, a standard for comparison is evident, "a characteristic that distinguishes from one another or from the average." This version of the first definition and the second definition (preferential distinction) suggest modern notions of difference as deficiency. When discussing or describing people, I argue that adhering to the generalized initial definition, "the quality or state of being different." As with postmodern endeavors to acknowledge difference without hierarchical categories, difference matters.

In order to recognize difference without hierarchies requires us to "embrace paradox" and "shed all remnants of idealism" (Kobayashi 1997, 7). It requires acknowledging the malleability of space, distance, and time. Instead of homogenizing the world into a singular global village, multifocal interpretations reveal the ways in which people have marginalized and been marginalized according to hierarchical categorizations. Differences need to be recognized and acknowledged, not to stigmatize or "other," but in order to learn from and value various ways of knowing the world, to develop emancipatory politics and relationships, to enhance understanding of specific circumstances.

Nineteenth century geography schoolbook authors worked within an increasingly complex epoch in history, and their constructions of difference as a basis for oppression were rooted in power struggles. Teaching how such constructions worked to stigmatize and "other" and, at the same time, continue to inform worldviews, requires critiquing school subjects themselves (Willinsky 1998). In the current context of increasing standardization and rigorous assessment in schools, such critiques are often deemed dangerous, radical, and a waste of time (or, a waste of money). Underlying the resistance to more emancipatory practices in schools is the fear of the status quo being undermined. Power lies at the heart of representations of difference, and the longing for a singular, unified national identity (the United States-as-melting pot, for example) works to erase differences that interrupt the hegemonic forces of the status quo. As Shirley R. Steinberg (2001, xix) articulates, "It is not a small, definable world after all." The liberal assimilationist take on the world denies the complex of identities participating in global cultures, and Steinberg refuses to reduce or avoid the complexity of global perspectives.

Emphasizing equity and a shared humanity need not interfere with multifocal views and experiences.

An analysis of historical constructions of identities in geography schoolbooks helps us to appreciate how ideas rooted in justifying oppression still inform contemporary constructions and representations. Such an analysis reveals the power struggles over cultural politics and identity formation, where differences inform global relationships. By not acknowledging differences, peoples' identities are rejected, their life experiences are denied, and they are relegated to the margins, or rendered altogether invisible.

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# APPENDIX

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# VITA

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